

Department of Sociology

**THE ROLE OF SOCIAL WORK IN THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT OF RWANDA:**

A comparative sociological analysis of South Africa and Rwanda



**Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
Masters Degree in Sociology**

by

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously, in its entirety or in part, submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature:

Date:

ABSTRACT

Nowadays, members of the global community from various arenas are committed to promoting social development and removing the obstacles of all kinds of social ills that have been undermining the quality of people's lives, such as: poverty, social conflicts, HIV/AIDS, injustice and violence. Is this feasible? If yes, how can we proceed to the full realisation of human development?

This study made a close examination of the case of Rwanda, and compared it with that of South Africa, with which Rwanda shares various historical and psychosocial realities such as colonisation, and the need for reconciliation and reinforcement of communal solidarity in order to proceed with and hasten the development process. The orientation of the study is centred on the hypothetical question: **“Why and how can social work be used as a means of addressing social problems and promoting social development in Rwanda?”**

The study, basically of a qualitative nature, constitutes both library and field-based research. Accordingly, the literature and the empirical investigation were used as key methods to realise the goals and objectives stated. In the empirical study, a triangulation of data gathering techniques, namely interviews, focus group discussions and direct observations, was given the primary emphasis. By this means, enriched information from both South Africa and Rwanda permitted various insights into crucial socio-economic challenges, social development agents, the preferred approaches for social development and the working conditions of social workers. The latter conditions were usually described as being very difficult and trying.

Overall, the research findings show that:

- ♦ There is a serious need for social development both in South Africa and Rwanda in order to respond to the legacies of their pasts – especially to the upheavals of apartheid and the genocide respectively (i.e. poverty, mistrust, social disintegration) – as well as to a range of other social ills such as HIV/AIDS, violence and unforeseen factors;
- ♦ The developmental approach, well espoused by the South African government which chose to incorporate it in national policies, particularly in the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997), is the most suited to foster the attainment of social development;

- ◆ Social work, using community work as the preferred method, is amongst the key professions at the forefront of the operationalisation of social development and hence, of the promotion of improved social welfare conditions;
- ◆ Empowerment, particularly of vulnerable people, is a key to social change;
- ◆ Social work, while moving towards a developmental approach – as developmental social work – needs to consolidate its position by contributing effectively to development instead of continuing to focus on individual cases /therapies.
- ◆ Introduction of social work training at the National University of Rwanda (NUR) is a positive omen for the stimulation of social development in the country;
- ◆ There is a particular need to update the social work curriculum in Rwanda.

Lastly, specific recommendations are given. The main recommendation is that efforts to conduct a comprehensive war against social problems be unified. In terms of social work, it is important that social work professionals be given more consideration and more stimulation. Conducive working conditions must be also created for them, especially at local level. Social workers, in turn, have to stand their ground, and work in good partnership with other professionals and social development agents for the good of all people, with special focus on the disadvantaged.

For Rwanda in particular, it is recommended that a national welfare policy be set up urgently to strengthen social work education at university, and that, in the process, reference be made to experienced countries such as South Africa. In this regard, educators must ensure that new graduates will effectively become catalysts for social development. This requires a good fit of theory and practice during the training process. Above all, it is advisable for Rwanda to promote community work practice through the community development model.

OPSOMMING

Sosiale ontwikkeling is 'n hedendaagse prioriteit by lede van die globale gemeenskap uit verskeie gebiede. Hulle streef daarna om die struikelblokke van verskeie sosiale wantoestande wat mense se lewensgehalte ondergrawe – bv. armoede, sosiale konflik, MIV/VIGS, ongeregtigheid en geweld – te verwyder. Is so-iets haalbaar? Indien ja, hoe kan ons voortbeweeg na die volle verwesenlikking van menslike ontwikkeling?

Rwanda en Suid-Afrika het albei te kampe met historiese en sosiaal-psigiese realiteite soos kolonialisme, 'n behoefte aan sosiale versoening en aan die versterking van gemeenskapsolidariteit ten einde sosiale ontwikkeling te bevorder en versnel. Hierdie studie sentreer om die vraag: **“waarom en hoe kan sosiale probleme in Rwanda aangepak en sosiale ontwikkeling bevorder word deur middel van maatskaplike werk?”**

Hierdie basies kwalitatiewe studie is op beide bronnestudie en veldwerk gegrond. Gevolglik was die gebruik van beskikbare literatuur en empiriese navorsing die sleutelmetodes om bg. doelwitte te bereik. Wat betref die empiriese studie is 'n drievoudige tegniek gebruik, nl. onderhoude, fokusgroep-besprekings en direkte waarneming. Verrykte inligting uit beide Suid-Afrika en Rwanda het dit dus moontlik gemaak om verskeie insigte m.b.t. kernvraagstukke betreffende sosio-ekonomiese uitdagings, sosiale ontwikkelingsagente, gewenste benaderings tot sosiale ontwikkeling en die werksomstandighede van maatskaplike werkers – wat gewoonlik as erg moeilik en uitputtend beskryf word – te bereik.

Oor die algemeen bewys die navorsingsresultate die volgende:

- ♦ Beide Suid-Afrika en Rwanda ondervind 'n ernstige behoefte aan sosiale ontwikkeling om op die erfenis van hul verlede te reageer (veral die omwentelings van apartheid en volksmoord, respektiewelik) – d.w.s. armoede, wantroue en sosiale verbokkeling, en daarby nog MIV/VIGS, geweld en ander onvoorsiene faktore.
- ♦ Die ontwikkelingsentriese benadering word duidelik geïllustreer deur die Suid-Afrikaanse regering, wat 'n nasionale beleid vanuit hierdie oogpunt aangepak het – soos veral spreek uit die Witskrif vir Sosiale Ontwikkeling [“White Paper for Social Development”] (1997). Hierdie is die mees gepaste benadering tot sosiale ontwikkeling.

- ♦ Maatskaplike werk (veral d.m.v. gemeenskapsinisiatiewe) is een van die sleutelberoepe m.b.t. die operasionalisering van sosiale ontwikkeling en die gevolglike verbetering van sosiale welsynstoestande;
- ♦ Bemagtiging, veral van kwesbare persone, is die sleutel tot sosiale transformasie;
- ♦ Maatskaplike werk behoort, terwyl dit na 'n ontwikkelingsentriese benadering (d.m.v. maatskaplike ontwikkelingswerk) beweeg, breedweg tot sosiale ontwikkeling by te dra, eerder as om op individuele gevalle of terapieë te fokus;
- ♦ Die instelling van opleiding in maatskaplike werk by die Nasionale Universiteit van Rwanda (NUR) is 'n goeie teken wat dui op sosiale ontwikkeling van hierdie land;
- ♦ Daar is veral 'n behoefte daaraan om die Rwandese kurrikulum vir maatskaplike werk te moderniseer.

Laastens word spesifieke aanbevelings gemaak. Dit word veral aanbeveel dat verskillende pogings om sosiale wantoestande aan te pak, saamgesnoer moet word. In terme van maatskaplike werk is dit belangrik dat professionele maatskaplike werkers meer aandag en aanmoediging behoort te kry. Daar moet ook aandag gegee word aan hul werksomstandighede, veral op plaaslike vlak. Op hul beurt moet maatskaplike werkers hulleself laat geld, in samewerking met ander beroepslui en bydraers tot sosiale ontwikkeling – tot voordeel van alle burgers, en met 'n fokus op sosiaal-benadeelde persone.

Vir Rwanda in die besonder word aanbeveel dat 'n nasionale welsynsbeleid dringend in werking gestel word om universiteitsopleiding in maatskaplike werk te verstewig, na die voorbeeld van lande soos Suid-Afrika wat ondervinding van so 'n proses het. In hierdie verband moet opvoeders verseker dat nuwe graduandi effektiewe katalisators van sosiale ontwikkeling sal wees. Om dit te bewerkstellig word goeie passing tussen teorie en praktyk benodig. Dit is veral raadsaam dat maatskaplike werk in die praktyk deur die gemeenskapsontwikkelingsmodel gerugsteun sal word.

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Charles KALINGANIRE.

DEDICATION

To Epiphanie DUSENGIYERA, my beloved wife, and to my dear children.

People acting as a strong, cohesive community can achieve more than individuals. When people work together in community, strategies for change that are sustainable are possible. When people identify with their community, they want to see it survive, which encourages a long-term perspective.

Van Soet (1997: xiii)

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Statement of the problem

“The social world is plagued by all kinds of social ills (Spencer’s term) such as crime, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, injustice and so on. In order to address these social ills, human beings continually devise different interventions – economic and social policies of upliftment, employment schemes, literacy programmes, poverty relief efforts and so on. In fact, one could argue that most of what human beings do in the social world through their interventions is aimed at improving the human condition.” (Mouton 1999: 2-3)

It can be deduced from this opening quote that human societies face numerous and inextricable problems. As stated by Sadowsky (1996: 1), among these problems or challenges are the provision for the individuals in society of good health, adequate education, opportunities for advancement, adequate housing, employment, sufficient income to meet material needs, a sense of personal security within the law, and a sense of security as a nation. It is important to specify that the socio-economic situation is severely deprived in developing countries, and especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where over forty percent of people live in extreme poverty and earn less than one US dollar a day.

The rapid social changes mostly characteristic of globalisation, privatisation, profit concerns and growing community divisions within nations have tended to exacerbate the above **situation**. Thus the dilemma persists: how to create a more humane world order and recognise the integrity of all people while there is a continuous human tendency to destabilise the balance between economic growth and quality of life?

These challenges are preoccupying governments, decision-makers, international and national organisations, and other socio-economic role-players. In fact, these agents are more than ever committed to improving the quality of life of people and particularly to alleviating the pain of the vulnerable. This entails a shift from modern Western thinking about development, which equates “**development**” to “**economic growth**”, to new understandings of development, which focus on “**social and community development**”. In this sense, Nederveen (2001: 6) argues: “*with human development in the mid-1980s came the understanding of development as capacitation following Amartya Sen’s work on capacities and entitlements. In this view the point of **development** above*

*all, is that it is **enabling**. The core definition of development in the Human Development Reports of UNDP is ‘the enlargement of people’s choices.’”*

In view of the above consideration, Nederveen embraces the resolution of the UN World Summit for Social Development held 6-12 March 1995 in Copenhagen, Denmark. At the conclusion of the Summit, governments adopted a Declaration and Programme of Action, which represents a new consensus on the need to put **people at the centre of development**. Among the groundbreaking agreements made by the World’s leaders in the Declaration are ten commitments to:¹

- ◆ eradicate absolute poverty by a target date to be set by each country;
- ◆ support full employment as a basic policy goal;
- ◆ promote social integration based on the enhancement and protection of all human rights;
- ◆ achieve equality and equity between women and men;
- ◆ accelerate the development of Africa and the least developed countries;
- ◆ ensure that structural adjustment programmes include social development goals;
- ◆ increase resources allocated to social development;
- ◆ create “an economic, political, social, cultural and legal environment that will enable people to achieve social development”;
- ◆ attain universal and equitable access to education and primary health care; and
- ◆ strengthen cooperation for social development through the UN.

One can ask whether the signatories have been implementing the Summit agreements and hence whether the practice matches the theory. This is a very difficult question, and it is up to each country to examine its situation. However, some efforts have been made, but when considering what has been inherited from the twentieth century (social problems such as increasing aggregate wealth, poverty, social and income inequality within and between nations, distresses among vulnerable people), there is still a long way to go.

¹ The information is from Internet: <http://www.visionoffice.com/socdev/wssd.htm>

Given all this, can there be hope in the 21st century? The situation constitutes a major challenge as summarised by Dr Mahbub Ul-Haq – former special advisor to the UN Development Programme – through the following question:

“Can we make the twenty-first century a century of human development, when all people enjoy access to education and health, when each individual is enabled to utilise her or his full human potential, when all people have developed their basic capabilities and enjoy equal access to the opportunities of life”? Some sub-questions should be added:

- If yes, how and with what tactics can these things be achieved?
- What might be the role of social work in addressing the challenge?

Chapter 2 and more particularly **Chapter 3** discuss and clarify the situation.

Throughout the available literature, social work authors are increasingly placing great emphasis on social change and showing that social work has been struggling for the promotion of the general well-being of people. According to the IFSW (1999: 1), there is no doubt that *“since its beginnings over a century ago, social work practice has focused on meeting human needs and developing human potential...In solidarity with those who are disadvantaged, the profession strives to alleviate poverty and to liberate vulnerable and oppressed people in order to promote social inclusion”*. In light of this statement, it would be right to say that social work has been making an appreciable contribution to the battle against social ills and thus to the promotion of social development. In the same way, Gray’s view (1998: 2) emphasising the fact that *“the philosophy and value system of the social work profession is compatible with the theory of social development”* remains convincing.

Nevertheless, present conditions that result from rapid socio-economic changes cause complex problems for the domain of the profession and *“require modifications in the teaching and learning of social work both in the practicum and classroom”* (Bisman et al., 1999: 1). The necessity for restructuring is also Gray’s concern (1998: 4) who specifies: *“As one of the potential role players in social development efforts, the social work profession is facing a number of fundamental challenges. It has to decide not only how to change its orientation, but whether it should do so at all. Do social workers view themselves as frontline social development workers, or should they remain within the therapeutic mode of intervention?”* (Cf. **Chapter 3**)

The present study sought to explore this complex situation by analysing, in particular, the case of South Africa and Rwanda. The criteria for choosing these countries are that they share, to a certain extent, a number of historical, socio-economic and political realities. In this connection, some specific points have been taken into consideration throughout the study to ensure a systematic comparison. These are namely:

- ◆ the fact that South Africa and Rwanda have endured many events over time that culminated respectively in apartheid and genocide and that have stained their reputation throughout the world;
- ◆ the existence of complex socio-economic problems – some as a consequence of the disasters mentioned – that require to be dealt with seriously;
- ◆ the great concern for the consolidation of a sharing and caring society; and thus the need for the promotion of human development;
- ◆ the need for the participation of the population in the development process, with the focus on the integration of vulnerable people;
- ◆ the firm determination to correct what has been wrong, to change the country's image and to give birth to a new South Africa and a new Rwanda within the African context, but also without being marginalised in respect of global realities.

Briefly, it could be said that, according to their respective and sad experiences, the success of both countries in defeating the socio-economic challenges they are faced with can serve as a particular example to other countries in that the positive transformation of a society, even after adverse conditions, is possible given the resolution of its members. South Africa and Rwanda have already started this long journey of transformation during which they can learn from each other with, however, the assumption that Rwanda could benefit more from South Africa, which is "ahead" in various areas (legislation, social welfare programmes and education). Both countries have committed themselves to eradicating all forms of barriers to positive social change and to the enhancement of the quality of life of their respective peoples. Indeed, these countries are determined to overcome all the effects of the difficult upheavals they have undergone and to maintain a constant struggle for reconstruction and sustainable social welfare. That is, of course, a difficult task but not an impossible one to fulfil: success will depend upon the willingness of the citizens, and their real involvement in the social development programmes.

In order to address the serious obstacles to the overall socio-economic problems that the nation faces (poverty, inequality and so forth), South Africa has adopted general policies and set up appropriate programmes and strategies. Among these, there are:

- ◆ The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), a policy that is based on six principles:

“An integrated programme, based on the people, that provides peace and security for all and builds the nation, links reconstruction and development (or meets basic needs and builds infrastructure) and deepens democracy” (RDP quoted in Louw, 1998: 134). This is in conformity with the eight principles of Batho Pele as stated in the Government Gazette dated 1 October 1997. These principles are: Consultation, Service standards, Access, Courtesy, Information, Openness and Transparency, Redress and Value for money.

- ◆ The enactment of a strong legislation within the social welfare domain with its focus on the society-centred approach and a sincere partnership between government, civil society and the private sector.

- ◆ The programme of educational transformation, and particularly, the willingness to develop the partnership Government–High Education–Communities. In this case, the Social Work Departments within the universities are fully committed to delivering well trained, highly skilled people, ready to collaborate efficiently with other elites and to make the country *“capable to compete successfully in a rapidly changing international context.”* (Cloete, 2000: 4)

The above sound goals and policies should serve as an inspiration for Rwanda whose situation is quite similar. In fact, although Rwanda’s unique situation requires solutions relevant to itself, the country has a great need to learn from the experiences of others, especially from South Africa. In fact, South Africa is, more than any other country, a suitable example for Rwanda: the two countries are comparable to a certain extent especially if one takes into consideration the African realities they share, reviews the similarities in their past (colonisation, injustice, non-respect of human rights and so on), and considers the twin processes that remain their key concern – reconciliation and transformation. In this connection, President Mbeki states: *“I have a sense that because of your experience and our experience, these two countries and these two people have a particular responsibility to our continent. None of us on this continent suffered the terrible*

*genocide that you did. Nobody else on the continent suffered the terrible disaster of apartheid. Therefore we must succeed in overcoming the legacy which led to that genocide and all the things that led to the apartheid crime against humanity."*²

In brief, South Africa and Rwanda will have to work energetically to help their peoples, especially those whose living conditions have been deteriorating over time because of longstanding, traumatising events and their consequences. In other words, both countries need to promote social development. The effort has, of course, started promisingly, and appreciable achievements in terms of human development are noticeable, particularly in South Africa (some revealing indicators are presented in **Chapter 2**). However, the process is not an easy one and there is still a great need of hard work to be done in both countries in order to improve the social welfare conditions. This work entails addressing social problems by implementing well thought out social policies, and hence dedicated social development agents are urgently required for the success of the related social programmes. At the forefront, the social welfare and higher educational institutions could both play an important role in supplying this need, the former as organisations dedicated to the practice of social work, and the latter as providers of social work training. The successes and weaknesses of the materialisation of social development in South Africa and Rwanda are shown throughout **Chapter 5** and by implication, the lessons to be learnt are clearly presented in **Chapter 6**.

In concluding this point, it is important to draw attention to the fact that the WHAT – HOW questions remain crucial. By making explicit the axial questions raised earlier, the following issues require particular attention:

- ◆ What should South Africa and Rwanda do to address the problem of an increasing number of people becoming more and more vulnerable in the aftermath of apartheid and genocide while, at the same time, the two countries need to adapt themselves to African and global transformations?
- ◆ What practice approaches are best suited and relevant to inherited and emerging problems?

² From the Address by the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, at the National Summit of Unity and Reconciliation, Kigali, Rwanda, 18 October 2000.

- ◆ In what ways should social work education/training restructure itself in South Africa and strengthen its base in Rwanda for a better transformation of individuals and communities? And ultimately,
- ◆ How to promote a better “fit” between economic growth and improved quality of life, especially in Rwanda?

These questions relate to the whole study and particularly to **Chapters 3, 5 and 6**.

To deal with the questions posed it would be possible to follow various avenues of research and produce numerous documents. In order to keep closely to the requirements of the treatise, it has been necessary to define the limits and to determine the purpose and objectives of the research.

1.2 Purpose and objectives

- ♠ The purpose of the research is formulated as follows:

With reference to South Africa and the contemporary orientation of social work, to assess why and how social work can be used as a solution to address socio-economic problems in Rwanda.

- ♠ More specifically, the focus has been placed on the following objectives:

- ◆ To undertake a sociological survey of how the two societies are organised and function with special reference to the need for social development in both countries.
- ◆ To outline the policy framework, guidelines and structures for social service intervention programmes in South Africa and Rwanda, and to determine how these relate to the needs of vulnerable groups.
- ◆ To describe the current state of social work practice and training in South Africa and Rwanda and to determine what changes would be relevant to empower social workers for their efficient participation in the socio-economic development of both countries, and especially of Rwanda.
- ◆ To offer recommendations regarding how social welfare in Rwanda can be promoted through social work.

1.3 Rationale for the study

It is very harassing both for South Africans and Rwandans to be constantly confronted with questions either on “apartheid” or on “genocide”. In fact, many people nurture a negative image of these countries in their minds. This attitude is of course due to the blatant human rights abuse that characterised every aspect of the respective societies. However, these two countries have already started to set up new developments and are determined to maintain a continuous effort towards the reconstruction and sustainable welfare of their peoples. This effort institutes a long-term project that requires a combination of all efforts for success.

At the moment, when little academic literature exists on the specific matters in the context mentioned, the aim of this piece of writing is to make a contribution, albeit small, by providing unbiased, explanatory, scientific and fresh information that will serve in various domains. In fact, it is assumed that the outcomes of the study will be beneficial to a very wide audience, such as educators, students, professionals or policy-makers. The study should assist them in preparing themselves to rectify the image of their respective societies and to promote social progress.

While ‘radicals’ and ‘sceptics’³ are competing for the recognition of their respective views on globalisation, governments, leaders, agencies, as well as professionals in various domains, can endeavour to tackle the rising problems and adequately manage the transition to the new and ‘shrinking’ society. The present study provided a good opportunity to identify essential ingredients in sustainable social development, focusing on communities that have to learn “*to think global while acting local*” (Powell’s terminology).”

Regarding Rwanda in particular, where social welfare policies have always been compartmentalised, it is expected that the results of this research will inspire decision-

³ According to Professor Anthony Giddens, paraphrased by Powell, F. (2001: 7), there are two schools of thought, namely ‘radicals’ and ‘sceptics’. Radicals argue that not only is globalisation very real, but that its consequences can be felt everywhere. Sceptics, on the other hand retort that globalisation is essentially a myth. Politicians do have the power to intervene in the economy, but lack the will. The sceptics perceive globalisation as a process of Westernisation, or more narrowly, Americanisation.

makers/policy formulators who will undoubtedly understand the importance of social work for social development in the country. Furthermore, all those who have been usurping the role of social worker will discover and understand that a social worker is not just any person, but someone who is skilled and well prepared to work with both the person and the environment.⁴

Finally, the study is undoubtedly of extreme importance for the National University of Rwanda (NUR); it will help to strengthen the efforts undertaken four years ago in setting up a branch of social work within the Department of Social Sciences. The problems of how higher social work education should match social realities today, in general and what approaches should be relevant for an adequate preparation of future practitioners, in particular, have been examined and in such a way that some proposals for a suitable curriculum for the NUR are given. There is a sincere hope that this dissertation will interest all those who have a need to know more about how a shattered society like Rwanda should revive itself and achieve sustainable social development.

1.4 Orientation of the study

There is a South African saying, ‘**Umuntu ungumuntu ngabantu**’, which means “*A person is a person through, with and in association with other persons*”. In fact, if there are any chances for South Africa and Rwanda, as well as for other developing countries, and indeed, for the world in general, to achieve positive social change and the empowerment of oppressed people, then it would be best to utilise the holistic, system-based approaches in the social development process. Accordingly, it becomes important to consider human problems to be addressed as “*social in nature, arising out of social conditions and relationships, and having consequences which extend beyond the individual immediately concerned*” (Howard, 1990: 189). In other words, the holistic approach requires seeing the “*client as part of multiple, overlapping systems that comprise the person’s social and physical environment.*” (Netting, 1993: 4)

⁴ The term environment must be understood in its larger signification: it concerns the social, physical and organisational objects, conditions and factors surrounding and influencing individuals and society (Bernstein. & Gray, 1997: 5).

The study is based on a **developmental approach**, which does not minimise individual problems but which asserts that these can best be solved by unified personal effort. More explicitly, and hypothetically, it is assumed that *“social work is at the forefront in promoting social development”*. The underlying thought in this study is orientated to the **developmental social work** approach. The chief ground for adopting such a choice is the desire to explore how people-driven development is possible once the helpers have adopted suitable strategies and act mainly to empower.

It is clear that professionals and future practitioners have to be well skilled and act in a way that enhances the response to scarce external resources required for the alleviation suffering by deprived people. Indeed, *“extra reliance must be placed on the indigenous resources that people have within themselves, even although these may be latent and untapped”* (McKendrick, 2001: 109). This approach entails, in other words, the necessity of focusing on *“realising the potential of people to themselves recognise, release and utilise the potential resources which they possess”* (McKindrick, 2001: 109). Nothing can evolve without the real integration/involvement of the people themselves. It is essential that, beyond considering that vulnerable people should be merely assisted, they should be involved in the development process themselves. Each one of them is capable of participating, at a certain level, in the improvement process of his/her situation and thereby, in the development of the whole society. Hence, having enough, highly qualified personnel and especially social work professionals for helping such people remains an incontestable obligation. While depicting the role of different social development agents (government, civil society, educational organisations and so on), particular attention is paid to the academic organisations as the training ground for enabling agents. These agents are in fact expected to be leaders in society in various areas and thus to stimulate the development process. In this respect, a strong focus is placed on the Social Work Departments and the partnership of **community–social welfare organisations–university** is highlighted.

In brief, the study is in favour of improving the living conditions of people in both Rwanda and South Africa. The major strategy considered as best practice is one based on the organisation of communities by making these sufficiently competent so that they can themselves address the problems of their members. This was the pivot of the research, and throughout its process it has been helpful to refer to Rubin's consideration (2001: xii):

“Organising is about empowering people, individually and collectively. Bringing about change is not enough unless change is brought about democratically. Solving problems is important, but even more important, people need to learn to solve their own problems, to develop the knowledge, skills, and self-confidence to sustain the effort.”

1.5 Research methods

The issue of methodology is fundamental to any research, be it in the natural or social sciences. In fact, the question of choosing appropriate methods should be the key concern of every researcher from the beginning to the end of his/her work if that work is to achieve valid and reliable results. First, the description of the overall research approach and data collection methods is made. Then the object of analysis is specified and finally, information relating to the implementation of research is given.

1.5.1 Overall research approach and data collection methods

This research was based mainly on qualitative analyses. It is known that *“the aim of qualitative research, as opposed to quantitative, is to collect information on a particular subject in-depth. To this purpose, open-ended questions are asked to different people, and various individuals or groups are asked to discuss or present their experience on the topic from different angles. The purpose is to search for new and different themes that emerge from individuals rather than to find out how many individuals present or agree with a certain statement.”* (Donà et al., 2001: 18)

However, some quantitative information was generated from interview data and served usefully for objective comparisons at different levels. More particularly, a profile of social work professionals using specific variables like gender and background was provided. Furthermore, the proportions of certain categories of participants to others in reaction to some chosen statements were established (cf. **Chapter 5**).

The literature study and empirical investigation were used as key methods to realise the goal and objectives stated. The literature study is intended to cover the theories of social development and social work, their philosophy, values and principles, as well as their importance, especially as applied in South Africa and Rwanda. The empirical investigation was conducted to assess the

realisation of social work. Throughout this investigation, different social welfare and educational organisations were visited and this constituted a very useful opportunity to examine how community work practice is helping, or could help, to address social problems.

During the research process, qualitative data gathering techniques were given primary emphasis, involving **interviews**, **direct observations**, **Focus Group Discussions (FGD)** and the use of available **documentation**. Such a combination of multiple viewpoints contributed greater validity to the research endeavour.

Interviews consisted of asking a range of semi-structured questions to people who have personal experience of the social development and/or social work issues.

Focus Group Discussions typically are “*small informal groups of persons asked a series of questions that starts out very general and then becomes more specific*” (Thyer, 2001: 201). FGDs consist in facilitated meetings in which people are brought together to discuss specific topic(s). These discussions were only organised with students.

With regard to the purpose and objectives of the study, different categories of informants were asked specific questions. The guidelines to these questions are given in **Table 1** below. Questions posed to lecturers and managers of social welfare organisations were in general similar except on the particular points of field experience or problems encountered by social work practitioners.

Table 1: Guidelines for interviews and Focus Group Discussions

Purpose	Objectives	Informants	Guidelines for interviews/ Discussions	Type of illustrative case studies
<i>With reference to South Africa and the contemporary orientation of social work, to assess why and how social work can be used as a solution to address socio-economic problems in Rwanda</i>	<i>1. To undertake a sociological survey of how the two countries are organised and function with special reference to the need for social development in both countries</i>	<i>Social workers</i>	<i>Experience and attributes; description of the socio-economic context of the working area; current and foreseeable challenges and how they are/will be dealt with, concretisation in the orientation of the service.</i>	<i>According to the aim of the study, four specific case studies have been chosen and are presented at the end of Chapter 5. Globally, they relate to the operationalisation of social development through the implementation of community work programmes/projects by social welfare organisations. Two cases are taken from Rwanda (combating poverty and HIV/AIDS respectively) and two others from South Africa (one refers to child protection and the other emphasises volunteering at tertiary institutions as a means to address various social problems).</i>
		<i>Lecturers / Managers of social welfare organisations</i>	<i>Experience and attributes; general and specific orientation of the institution/department with regard to social development; current and foreseeable challenges and how they are/will be dealt with.</i>	
		<i>Students</i>	<i>Developmental orientation vs. current and foreseeable challenges.</i>	
		<i>Other key informants</i>	<i>Their thinking on social development paradigm; crucial social problems and how they are addressed.</i>	
	<i>2. To outline the policy framework, guidelines and structures for social service intervention programmes in South Africa and Rwanda, and to determine how these relate to the vulnerable groups</i>	<i>Social workers</i>	<i>Legal or policy frameworks they refer to in their service; channels and means for helping vulnerable people.</i>	
		<i>Lecturers / Managers social welfare organisations</i>	<i>Main laws and/or social welfare policies that exist so far and to what extent they refer to them; current social welfare structures vs. administrative organisation of the country and assistance to vulnerable people.</i>	

		Students	To what extent a focus is placed on South African/Rwandan social welfare policies; which groups are the most vulnerable (experience from practicals)?
		Other key informants	Idea of the situation of vulnerable groups/communities and on how these are helped by social workers.
3.To describe the current state of social work practice and training in South Africa and Rwanda, and to determine what changes would be relevant to empower social workers for their efficient participation in the socio-economic development of both countries, and particularly of Rwanda.	Social workers	Importance of social work; knowledge and skills vs. social realities; working conditions with regard to collaboration with different development agents; suitable approaches (case work, group or community work).	
	Lecturers / Managers of social welfare organisations	Social work: role in social development; assessment of curricula; integration theory and practice: ability of social workers and their status; favoured approaches.	
	Students	Theory vs. practice, referring to experience from practicals; status; suitable approaches to address social problems.	
	Other key informants	Social work and its importance; ability and status of social workers: appreciation.	
4. To offer recommendations regarding how social welfare in Rwanda can be promoted through social work.	Social workers	Suggestions to social development agents for the promotion of social welfare through social work, particularly to: - social welfare and educational institutions; - social work professionals and - the community.	
	Lecturers / Managers of social welfare organisations		
	Students		
	Other key informants		

The practice of 'observation' normally constitutes going into a community and actually scrutinizing all phenomena relating to the defined goal (s). In other words, the researcher watches and listens to what is happening (by focusing generally on both verbal and non-verbal interactions) and takes note of the physical make up of the community. This was the procedure for observation followed by the researcher on the occasions of visits to various social welfare organisations for interviews or when participating in certain activities occasionally conducted by one or other organisation within the neighbourhoods of the universities targeted (e.g. participation in workshops, follow-up visits, sensitisation meetings and so forth). In order to obtain reliable results, a series of criteria for observations was established in advance and the main ones are as follows:

- the categories of social service beneficiaries;
- the kinds of assistance primarily provided;
- the attitudes of social work agents and service users;
- the strategies used in making people aware of and responsible for their situation;
- the level of community involvement in preventing social problems and promoting social development;
- the level of empathy of social development agents, leaders or other elites with vulnerable people and the contribution of these people to the promotion of social welfare; and
- environmental living conditions in general.

Reference to available documentation was of great assistance, and comprised recent research, reports, and papers or articles exploring specific in-depth aspects of social development and social work in the context of the study. Documentation was particularly valuable in enriching the case studies.

1.5.2 Object of analysis

♠ *Selection of sites*

The purpose of the research is to determine the role of social work training in promoting social development in Rwanda, especially compared to the South African experience. Given the general picture of the psychosocial and socio-economic contexts both in South Africa and Rwanda, it was

important to explore the question more deeply and narrowly. Therefore, the main criterion was to choose fieldwork sites in which social work education and social work practice occur effectively. In South Africa, the Western Cape Province was chosen. The Province is situated in the southwestern corner of the country and has the second highest urbanised population (88,9 %) after Gauteng (98,1%) according to the 1996 census results. A significant socio-economic divide is observable in the Province, particularly in the cities, while there is a continuing migration process that does not always fulfil the expectations of people in search of better living conditions. A definite assumption was that dynamic social welfare organisations currently dealing with a variety of social problems (arising from the situation described hereunder) would readily be found in the Province. Furthermore, it was possible to find higher educational institutions providing social work training from which enriching and complementary information would certainly be obtainable. Three institutions, namely the University of Stellenbosch (US), the University of the Western Cape (UWC) and Huguenot College (HG) were chosen because of their standing, highly qualified social work personnel, history and particular experience, and their collaboration with the social welfare organisations.

In Rwanda, the focus was placed mainly on Butare Province (in the south of the country), which accommodates the National University of Rwanda (NUR) in which a programme of social work education is run. Another reason is that Butare has been the first to host a secondary social school (Ecole Sociale Karubanda "ESK", which has become Ecole Notre Dame de la Providence "ENDP"). In addition, Butare is the Province most affected by the genocide, accounting for 22% (around 240 000 people) of victims. The yearly report for 2000 reveals that 35% of people in the Province are widows, there are 15 458 foster children, 8 777 orphaned Heads of Household and 33 424 extremely poor families. These figures demonstrate the urgent need for social welfare services, and direct the attention of those interested in knowing what living conditions are like in such a situation, and how the vulnerable could be enabled to take charge of their own destinies. In order to obtain a range of information, Byumba Province was marginally included as it accommodates a social work school. Kigali City was also taken into consideration because of its capacity as the capital and administrative centre of the country, but most importantly because the headquarters of almost all helping organisations are based there and a large number of assistant social workers are found there.

♣ *Selection of participants in the study*

In this research, the target group is comprised of social work professionals practising mainly in the neighbourhoods of the above-mentioned educational institutions as well as students in their final year (6th year at ENDP-Karubanda and BA or MA programmes at university level). In order to obtain as much information as possible, a range of individuals was asked to collaborate. They included particularly social work lecturers and managers of social welfare organisations, either by virtue of their qualification, expertise, experience or function. Other key informants were chosen with reference to their effective or potential role in the promotion of social development, their ability to provide relevant information that could illuminate experience and generate hypotheses for the current investigation, and sometimes, on account of the fact that they were confronted with various social problems. This latter group was composed of local leaders, intellectual elites, representatives of different religious groups, and representatives of vulnerable groups or groups at risk.

In terms of the activities conducted with all these people, interviews and focus group discussions were favoured, as previously mentioned. For this purpose, they were visited in different organisations or various places, which simultaneously facilitated observations (social welfare services, universities, schools, crèches, public departments, religious institutions, NGOs, townships, settlements, various associations and rural areas especially in Rwanda).

Interviews of social work professionals were organised with the help of managers of social welfare organisations or their representatives who facilitated contacts between these and the researcher. The professionals concerned were mostly social workers involved in community work projects or charged with the supervision of social work students during their practicals. To interview the lecturers, the heads of departments played a very important intermediary role and with their guidance, appointments were fixed with the lecturers concerned and interviews took place on each occasion in the lecturers' offices.

Relating to focus group discussions, arrangements were made according to the academic duties in each institution. Generally, meetings with the students were held in classrooms, except for the group of 4th year students at the University of Stellenbosch who were contacted while conducting their practicals at the Cape Town Child Welfare Society (the researcher himself was at the time gathering information at the same organisation). Participants in focus group discussions were

mostly female because of the composition of the targeted classes. For the MA students at US, BA students at NUR and pupils at ENDP-Karubanda, in each case, all participated in discussions. At UWC, only those available were contacted.

Regarding the sample size, the representative sample was a minor preoccupation. Achieving internal validity and obtaining results transferable to other similar contexts remained the key concern. Accordingly, a convenient and randomly selected sample was employed. The following table summarises the participants in the study.

Table 2: Estimation of the number of participants in the study

Participants	Numbers	Percentage
Social Work Students (SWS) in FGD:		
• University of Stellenbosch	20 (13 MA + 7 BA)	14.7%
• University of the Western Cape	6	4.5%
• National University of Rwanda (NUR)	10	7.4%
• ENDP - Karubanda	15	11%
Social Work Professionals (SWP or ASWP):		
• In South Africa	13	9.6%
• In the neighbourhood of NUR	12	8.8%
• In other areas of Rwanda (Byumba and Kigali City)	8	5.9%
Other participants in the study		
1) Lecturers (Privileged Key Informants)		
• South Africa	11 (5 US +3 UWC+ 3HC)	8.1%
• Rwanda (NUR)	5	3.7%
2) Managers of Social Welfare Organisation (Privileged Key Informants)		
• South Africa	7	5.1%
• Rwanda	7	5.1%
3) Key Informants		
• South Africa	7	5.1%
• Rwanda	15	11%
TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	Total: 136 South Africa: 64 Rwanda: 72 SWS & SWP: 84 Lecturers in Social Work Departments: 16 Other informants: 36	100% 47% 53% 61.7% 11.8% 26.5%

1.5.3 Research implementation and time frame

♣ *Procedure*

This research was conceived and implemented in different stages:

- Firstly, a preliminary familiarisation of the South African field was undertaken by visiting some organisations and participating in some of their programmes such as conferences (July-August 2001).
- The next stage was gathering and evaluating the available documentation on social policies, social development and social work both in South Africa (September-October 2001) and Rwanda (December-January 2002). This literature study was followed by the development of the research strategy and instruments.
- The systematic fieldwork took four and a half months (March to mid-May 2002 in South Africa and June-July 2002 in Rwanda). Some preliminary activities had however been launched in Rwanda in January 2002.

Before each interview, formal appointments were made, and the guidelines/questionnaires for the interview were expressly brought to the informant's attention in order to facilitate the process or to gain time on the day that the interview was conducted. Sometimes, the use of telephone or e-mail communication was necessary for the purposes of follow-up, precision or additional information.

♣ *Research considerations, limitations and constraints*

This research was conducted not only for the sake of knowledge but also with the aim of responding to the socio-economic needs of the people (particularly the vulnerable) in Rwanda and South Africa, especially by suggesting concrete solutions or strategies to be applied. Accordingly, it was essential to obtain results that were as objective as possible and of the highest quality possible. To ensure this, it was necessary to respect the ethical rights of participants while developing a relationship with them. As the information had to be recorded, the preliminary consent of the respondents was required. In addition, the participants were assured of the conditions of anonymity and confidentiality. For the most part, consent was obtained and in a very few cases, the responses were written. The intention of the above formalities was to enable the

participants to feel comfortable about providing honest and complete information. In some instances, reciprocation seemed helpful. In fact, it was sometimes enriching to openly exchange views on emerging key issues. These exchanges interested the participants greatly, especially when they involved questions that confront specific issues in Rwanda and in South Africa. Participants in Rwanda were greatly impressed as they were gradually enlightened about the importance of social work, its methods and principles.

Limitations and constraints on this research need to be mentioned. In this connection, it is important to repeat that the small representative sample imposes a prudent and limited ability to generalize on the findings. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that research very often has to compromise between constraints and resources. Thus, **although** the time frame for this research was apparently sufficient, because of the impossibility of using data collectors, it was inevitable that certain particular constraints had to be dealt with, including the following:

- To respond to simultaneous or close appointments was impossible and on occasion this imposed an embarrassing choice;
- Less than perfect language competence caused problems on the part of (some of) the interviewees as well as the interviewer. Interviews were on the whole conducted in English in South Africa but sometimes, respondents were tempted to talk in their own language; this undoubtedly impacted on the transmission of full information. In Rwanda, interviews were conducted in Kinyarwanda, French or English and the problems of standardisation or translation were evident;
- The research targeted students at a time when they were engaged in practicals, and this made it difficult to contact them, especially at UWC and HC (at HC, only a quick and informal exchange of views with the fourth year students took place);
- Finally, it was difficult to negotiate co-operation in some instances, particularly in Rwanda, because people complained of "research fatigue", saying that many researchers had been to them but no tangible benefit had been forthcoming.

1.5.4 Data analysis

Usually, analysing data entails summarising the information gathered and organising it in some way in order to draw conclusions. Basically, the grids in Appendices A and B

were used. The analysis was kept simple, generally using frequency counts and totals, but content analyses were also chosen. Summaries and explanatory statements were made and different quotes from interviews or focus group discussions were reported for illustration.

In brief, the information gathered was systematically organised, categorised and presented in an understandable manner: the results were expressed in percentages and displayed in contingency tables with regard to the relationships between various dimensions and with reference to defined items or the research objectives mentioned.

1.6 Overview of the thesis

The chapters are conceived in a complementary manner in this thesis. An overview is given in the table below.

Table 3: Brief overview of the thesis

Chapter	Overview
Chapter 1	<i>Highlights the socio-economic development challenges and poses questions about how social work can play a valuable role in promoting social development. The aim and objectives, as well as the rationale and motivation for the study, are presented. The methodological orientation is also specified.</i>
Chapter 2	<i>Firstly the definition of social development and its agents is given. Secondly, a historical overview of each country and the psychosocial similarities between the two countries are presented. With reference to specific human development indicators, the necessity to promote social development both in South Africa and Rwanda is shown.</i>
Chapter 3	<i>Focuses on social work as a valuable "role player" in social development. Beyond the definition and principles of social work, its methods and historical development, a special emphasis is placed on the demonstration of how social work is concerned with social development, particularly in Rwanda and South Africa where new orientations are more than ever necessary.</i>
Chapter 4	<i>The chapter permits a clearer understanding of the legislation and social welfare policies in Rwanda and South Africa. Furthermore, the relevance of such legal instruments for the eradication of socially unacceptable conditions is shown.</i>
Chapter 5	<i>An empirical chapter in which the functioning of social welfare organisations in Rwanda and South Africa is briefly described and the views of the participants in the study on various themes are presented. Illustrative case studies are also included at the end of the chapter in order to demonstrate the operationalisation of social development through community work.</i>
Chapter 6	<i>In the light of theoretical and empirical findings, general conclusions are drawn and recommendations for further investigation given. Furthermore, a special message is directed to Rwanda as well as to South Africa. Specific recommendations for facing social development challenges in Rwanda are highlighted.</i>

Chapter 2 Necessity for social development in South Africa and Rwanda

The aim of this chapter is first, to provide a definition of social development and to determine its agents. Then, a brief comparison between South Africa and Rwanda is made with particular focus being placed on the necessity for social development in both countries.

2.1 Definition and models of social development

2.1.1 General views and purpose

Social development is a multidimensional phenomenon. It comprises a broad field covering a wide range of activities and programmes. Social development is generally concerned with all people in society in the pursuit of their well-being:

"[It] aims ultimately at the maximum improvement of the material, cultural, social and political aspects... Furthermore, it embraces programmes and activities which enhance the capacities of members of society to fulfill ... existing and changing social roles and expectations and to accomplish various goals Finally, social development entails the democratisation of the development process and the orientation of the development effort to the needs and interests of the masses. It ensures ... equitable sharing ... in the benefits and burdens of development, the recovery of self-confidence and ... dealienation." (ACARTSOD in Mohamed, 1991: 8-9)

Midgley (1998: 91-92) offers the following description of social development:

- It does not separate economic from social policy but actively encourages the integration of the two;
- It provides a model that requires that all people benefit directly from economic development;
- It calls for the adoption of policies that create mass employment, enhance self-employment opportunities, invest extensively in human and social capital, and ensure that incomes are equitably raised for all citizens;
- It encourages the introduction of social service programmes that contribute directly to economic development;
- It advocates favourable interventions that enhance social capital formation.

Accordingly, it is important to note that social development aims ultimately at the promotion of individuals, families, communities and society at large without any

discrimination. Midgley's short description serves to facilitate the following more complete formulation of social development.

2.1.2 Towards a workable definition

The concept of social development was first expressed around the 1960-1970s and the principal ambition of its initiators was to expand the emergent views on *bottom-up* processes of social change. These views were counterposed to *top-down* economic growth dominated by large-scale and production-centred considerations. According to Meinert, Pardeck and Sullivan (1994: 23), top-down economic growth leads to an increase in gross national product (GNP) but *"little or none of it finds its way into the hands of the poor or into socially desirable forms of public expenditure, such as education, public health and hygiene, housing or family welfare."* In contrast, social development *"is said to result in the fulfillment of people's aspirations for personal achievement and happiness, to promote a proper adjustment between individuals and their communities, to foster freedom and security and to engender a sense of belonging and social purpose."* (Midgley, 1986: 2)

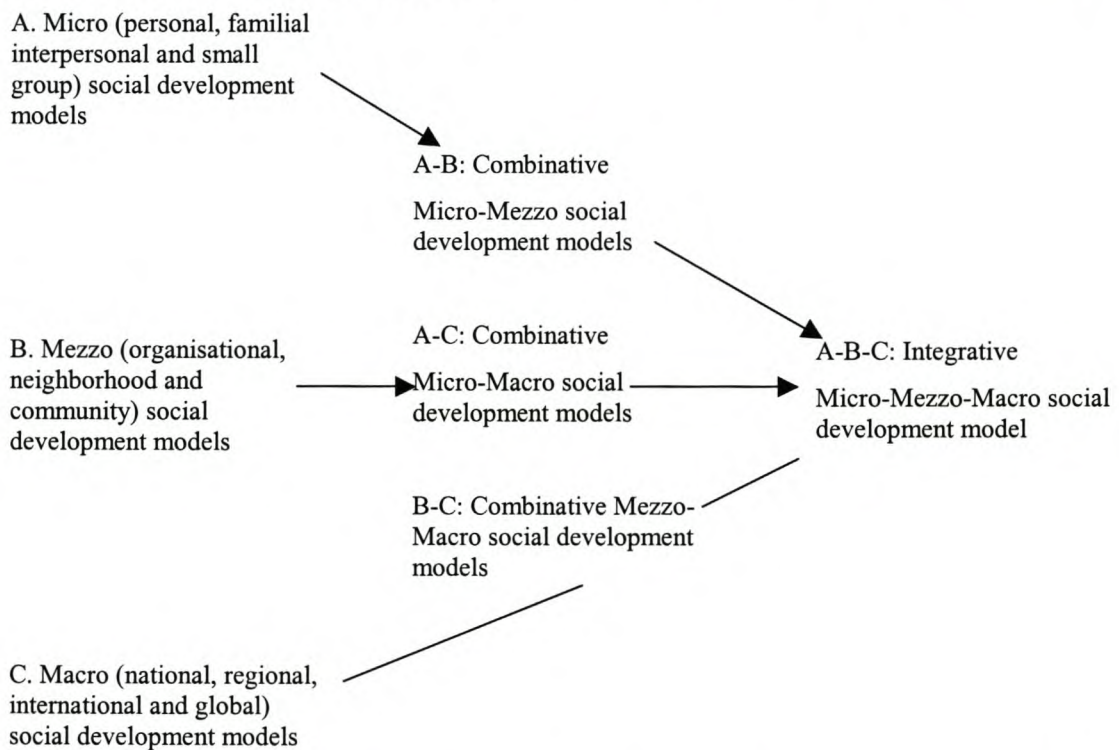
Accordingly, Midgley (1995: 25) defines social development as *"a process of planned social change to promote people's welfare in conjunction with a comprehensive process of economic development"*. Broadly – and this is the preferred definition used throughout this work – the World Bank Group (2001) states: *"Social development is development that is equitable, socially inclusive and therefore sustainable. It promotes local, national and global institutions that are responsive, accountable and inclusive and it empowers poor and vulnerable people to participate effectively in development processes."*

2.1.3 Models of social development

Society on the whole constitutes a complex system whose functioning is best understood by considering first, a variety of its components (mainly individuals, families and communities or other large geographically scattered populations), and then taking into consideration their interconnectedness with reference to specific mores. Social development in turn, takes place within this system and is manifested at various levels. There are *three major systems levels* from which three sets of models may be evolved. In fact, Meinert et al. (1994: 27-33) emphasise the models of *micro* -,

mezzo - and macrosystemic social development (models A, B and C) that serve as foundations for an integrative social development model. Meinert et al. (1994: 27) continue and argue that "in addition to the three sets of basic systems levels and corresponding models just mentioned, there are three sets of combinative models of micro-mezzo; mezzo-macro and micro-macro social development (models A-B, B-C and A-C). Finally, a comprehensive integrative model of social development (model A-B-C) is in large part an outgrowth and culmination of the various basic and combinative models In particular, the mezzosystemic level of organisation, neighbourhood and community plays a vital role in linking the micro and macro levels of social development." This assertion is well illustrated through the following figure taken from the same authors.

Figure 1: Basic, combinative and integrative model of social development according to Meinert, Padeck and Sullivan (1994: 28)



Note: Most likely pathways for practitioners to move toward integrative social development are depicted by simple arrows; less likely pathways are depicted by simple lines.

In terms of the above reasoning, it is assumed that the mezzosystemic level effectively constitutes a sound intermediary to social development. In fact, as this level connotes various organised groups (reference or belonging groups), networks and communities, it somehow helps individuals to respond more easily to their own needs as well as to those of other members. Furthermore, it is within such organisations that persons are supposed to develop a sense of integrity, to shift reasonably from the "I" to the "WE" conscience, with which the struggle for the self and common development becomes automatic.

Within this level, all kinds of information and connections – both horizontal and vertical, internal and external – develop and shape the group or community members who, finally, manifest the required quality of “self-regulation in the context of life with other people and other systems”. However, it needs to be specified that, for greater success, frequent or continuous empowerment and required stimulation may need to be administered. Accordingly, facilitators known as agents of social development are needed to play an essential role in this regard.

2.2 Agents of social development

The following agents of social development can be cited: the state, local government, international organisations, civil society, the private sector, volunteers and elites.

a) The state

The state is universally considered as a basic agent of development, at least "*in the sense of an institutional source of action to promote well-being*" (Allen & Thomas, 2000: 215). The state undertakes and promotes initiatives regarding development and can normally provide an enabling structure for development by other agencies. However, it can also be a structural obstacle to development especially when it proceeds by dictating its will to subordinate levels.

As stated by De Beer and Swanepoel (2000: 86-87), successful development needs a firm government commitment that is expressed in significant inputs: national policy support, administrative support and national planning and programming. It is important to indicate that the main functions of the state should remain enabling and supportive

while the participation of ordinary people progressively attains a peak. Unfortunately, this situation is rarely achieved in most Third World countries and not at all in Africa. Indeed, as stipulated by De Beer and Swanepoel (2000: 94):

"Development policies and the implementation of those policies are in a shambles. To rectify this situation, it will be necessary to re-evaluate the state's position vis-à-vis the international order and vis-à-vis its own constituency. Participatory development is not only a populist cry. It is imperative that ordinary people should be empowered to play their full role in their own development. Government has a very specific and important task in this regard."

b) Local government

Local government can be understood as the lowest level of administration, very close to communities and intended to “work together with the local citizens and other partners in the development process”. Unfortunately – and this is true – local governments have not really been playing their role independently in several instances. In this regard, De Beer and Swanepoel (2000: 99) argue: *"In some countries, but especially in developing African and socialist-inclined societies, local authorities have usually been weak, powerless, and normally sapped of initiative. In post-colonial Africa, particularly after gaining independence, central government was strengthened and local government weakened (Hilliard & Wissink, 1996a: 76). The local authorities usually slavishly executed the policies of the central government."*

Nowadays, it has become evident that no improvement or development can be effected without activating local governments and without offering sufficient responsibility to the authorities. In short, local governments are supposed to constitute the pillar of social development, especially by their co-ordinating of all kinds of activities undertaken for the promotion of social welfare conditions in general.

c) Official international organisations

These organisations, like UN agencies, normally receive resources known as Official Development Assistance (ODA) which originates in states that are the main aid donors. Those resources are specifically used in funding various social welfare programmes in developing countries.

d) Civil society

The term "civil society" requires clarification. There is in fact considerable debate about its meaning and limits. In the African context, and especially since the 1990s, the views from different international agencies have focused on the quality of civil society as the unit that *"constitutes the whole range of intermediate associations, from kinship organisations to social-service-oriented NGOs"* (Carothers in Hearn, 1999: 3). In this way, interest in assisting such organisations can be justified with the aim of promoting the continent's democratisation process. For the Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, South Africa (1997: 8), *"civil society includes the formal welfare sector, which is state-subsidised, religious organisations delivering welfare services, non-governmental organisations, the business sector, and informal social support systems and community networks. In general, civil society denotes the sphere of institutions, organisations and individuals in which people associate voluntarily to advance autonomously common interests."*

It is becoming more and more evident that, when suitably linked with the communities in need, different organs of civil society can intervene appreciably in the social change process, particularly by promoting the real empowerment of community members. Indeed, such organs are supposed to serve as useful agents in making people aware of their situation, defending their rights and helping them to grasp the opportunity for their direct involvement in the social development process.

Finally, it is important to specify that community-based organisations, which are themselves components of civil society, are the most suited for the promotion of social development, and thus are highly regarded. In fact, they *"have the important task of acting as channels for government and non-government attempts at development. It is the community-based organisation that must link with outside organisations to enable the flow of input and must mobilise the local people so that they can play their proper role in community development."* (Obaidullah Khan quoted by De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998: 41)

e) The private sector

The term "private sector" refers to all organisations or activities run by private individuals and which are completely independent of the government. Beyond the economic benefits they normally provide, individuals, agencies or companies acting in

such a manner can take initiatives to set up or to finance non-profit organisations that ultimately benefit social development. Such are the "private social welfare services" functioning variously in different countries under the auspices of private individuals. These services are said to be more competent and efficient and accordingly, they are more welcome in countries where good part of the population remains vulnerable to a range of social problems.

f) The volunteers

On the occasion of the International Year of Volunteers (IYV), 2001, a workshop was held at the University of Jordan, during which it was proposed that volunteers be considered as those people who have a personal desire and the ability to provide a community service with the aim of achieving a certain goal that will benefit both themselves and the beneficiaries, without monetary return and regardless the age of the volunteers. Williams (2001: 1) provides the following short definition: a volunteer is *"someone who, willingly and without receiving any payment, does a specified task that needs doing for a non-profit organisation"*.

There is no doubt that such work, when done seriously, is of great benefit to any society. Voluntary assistance is, as stipulated by participants in the workshop mentioned, extremely important to community development especially through:

- Creating a strong and cohesive community through the various, combined strengths of volunteers that develop and improve the quality of life of community members.
- Utilising the strengths of individuals and voluntary organisations for social development.
- Fulfilling the needs and wants of individuals and communities.
- Recognising and promoting the positive values of a community.
- Recognising and promoting partnerships and group work within the community.
- Increasing public awareness about issues that directly affect the lives of community members and groups.
- Assisting in moving the community from dependency to sharing responsibilities and tasks.
- Increasing community productivity in general.

f) Elites

In society, there have always been individual people or groups of people whose ideas, thoughts or actions serve as guidelines, and who influence or engage others in their daily lives. Such individuals or groups are referred to as elites. The French sociologist, Raymond Aron, in Capul and Garnier (1999: 153), describes elites as people who, in various fields, rise to the top of the hierarchy and occupy privileged positions. In other words, elite refers to "*those individuals or groups in any society who exercise power, possess superior wealth, or enjoy elevated status and prestige*"

(From <http://library.thinkquest.org/3376/Genktk7.htm> on 9/1/2001).

Modern society comprises several elites such as a political or power elite, military elite, business elite, intellectual elite, religious elite and professional elite. Elites possess tremendous potential to help the masses, with whom they are contrasted, in their socio-economic development. The potentialities of elites may be used in an altruistic way, and above all, for positive change, but experience has shown that elites can abuse their superiority and destabilise society or plunge citizens into despair and ongoing impoverishment.

2.3 Social development in South Africa and Rwanda: A comparison

Introduction

From 23 to 27 October 2000, an International Conference on Social Welfare was held in Cape Town, South Africa;

one year later, from 31 August to 8 September 2001, the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance took place in Durban, South Africa;

in Kigali, Rwanda, an International Conference on Genocide and Holocaust Survivors was organised from 25 to 30 November 2001; and

South Africa hosted the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg from 26 August to 4 September 2002.

The intent of these international gatherings indicates a promising start to the 21st century for both South Africa and Rwanda. In fact, these countries, in contrast to their

dark histories and past dubious reputations, are becoming more and more a "*beacon of hope to the world, representing that prospects of peace and reconciliation are within reach to all societies which are fundamentally undemocratic in nature.*" (Marks, 1999: 1)

The aim of this section is firstly to describe the similarities and disparities between South Africa and Rwanda historically, politically and socially. Then, a brief examination is made of the strengths in both countries that have led to some appreciable achievements so far. At the same time, there is emphasis on the main challenges that necessitate a multiplication of all efforts for the promotion of social development in both countries, and especially in Rwanda.

2.3.1 Brief historical description of South Africa

South Africa, situated at the southern tip of Africa, has a total land area of 1 221 000 km². The total population of 43 054 306 people of various races (Population Report 2000 produced by the National Population Unit) is composed of: Africans (76,7%); Coloureds (8,9%); Indians (2,6 %); Whites (10,9%) and 0,9 % unspecified. South Africa has "*wrestled with a legacy of 350 years of colonial dispossession and fifty years of institutionalised apartheid*" (Villa-Vicencio & Savage, 2001: 1). The present national boundaries were established in 1910.

South Africa was characterised for an extended period by tumultuous events before formally achieving democracy in 1994. Taking 1910 as a starting point, the main phases may be summarised as follows:⁵

- 1910 – 1948: union and racial segregation leading up to apartheid;
- 1948 – 1973: the apartheid years;
- 1973 – 1994: the final years of white domination;
- 1994 – 1999: the Mandela years; and
- 1999 – the present: the Mbeki years.

⁵ For more information, see Beck (2000: 101-205)

After prolonged suffering and a hard struggle by those opposed to apartheid, the election victory of Nelson Mandela's party in 1994, the ANC, opened the way to changing the face of South Africa, to banishing all forms of racial divisions and any tendency to retaliation. A shift to national unity and sustainable development thus became feasible and these still remain the essential preoccupation even under the mandate of President Thabo Mbeki.

In fact and as stated by Beck (2000: 205), "putting a stop to rampant violence and crime; providing homes, basic amenities, education, health care, and jobs for everyone; and increasing economic growth without creating a larger gap between the haves and the have-nots are only some of the problems that Mbeki and South Africa face... In many ways the Mandela years were an interlude, a transitional period of savouring the victory over apartheid. Now it is time to produce. Long-delayed expectations will have to be met, and promises kept."

South Africa has eleven official languages, namely Zulu, Xhosa, Afrikaans, Pedi, English, Tswana, Sotho, Tsonga, Swazi, Venda and Ndebele. English remains the most widely used language for all peoples.

Administratively, South Africa is divided into nine provinces. These are: Gauteng; Limpopo; Mpumalanga; North-West Province; Free State; Kwazulu-Natal; Eastern Cape; Northern Cape; and Western Cape. In fact, the country's interim constitution, which took effect in April 1994, adopted the resolution to free the former *Bantustans*, which again became part of the Republic. Each province is independent in how it acts to promote the quality of life of its population, focusing on the key approach of "building on the strengths of individuals, families and communities".

Despite some intra or inter-group variants or material/financial differences, all these groups have gained their freedom and it only "remains to be seen what they will do with it". They are all called upon, as "South Africans", to build a representative society and to develop a strong economy.

2.3.2 The picture of Rwanda

Rwanda is globally one of the least developed countries with a total surface area of 26 338 km², of which 1,4 million hectares only are arable. It is inhabited by 8,162,715 people (according to the preliminary results of the third census, August 2002) of whom over 90% subsist on peasant farming. Rwanda is located in eastern Central Africa and is landlocked by Uganda, Burundi, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Rwanda is, according to Law N° 43/2000 of 29/12/2000, composed of 12 provinces, namely Butare, Byumba, Cyangugu, Gikongoro, Gitarama, Gisenyi, Kibuye, Kibungo, Kigali-Ngali, Ruhengeri, Umutara and Ville de Kigali (Kigali City). Contrary to what is common in a range of African countries where wide variations in terms of language, religion, and culture exist, Rwandans constitute a fairly homogeneous people; they speak the same language "Kinyarwanda" and share the same culture. Kinyarwanda is the official language most spoken, followed by French and English.

During the period of colonisation (1899 – 1962) and for a little more than three decades thereafter, Rwanda was characterised by social divisions, conflicts and bad governance culminating in the 1994 genocide. These factors, and particularly the last event, have deeply destroyed the social fabric and plunged the country into a critical situation of underdevelopment.

The most significant and malignant legacy derives from deliberate cultivation of a socioethnic ideology that opposed the Tutsi and the Hutu. For the Belgians (colonisers), *"the objective was to fuel interethnic rivalries as a means of achieving political control as well as preventing the development of solidarity between the two ethnic groups, which inevitably would have been directed against the colonial regime... . These socioethnic divisions – which have unfolded since the 1920s – have left a profound mark on contemporary Rwandan society"* (Thomas & Wilkin, 1999: 118 – 119). So entrenched did this division become that, with the departure of the Belgians and the recovery of independence on 1 July 1962, the situation did not improve much. Instead, it has been deteriorating because of multiple factors that emphasise the principle of "divide and rule". Accordingly, favouritism, regionalism and clientelism have been added to the terrible legacy of ethnism. The genocide of

April-July 1994 decimated the population (1,074,017 victims according to the first official census over 90% of whom were Tutsi) and destroyed the entire infrastructure. The management of the aftermath remains a huge task. This is the situation that was inherited by the government of National Unity inaugurated on 18 July 1994. Since then the government has been struggling to organise the country and much has been achieved, but much still remains to be done. It is important for Rwandans to think positively and to recognise that each must lend his/her support in order to come completely out of the abyss.

2.3.3 Similarities and differences between South Africa and Rwanda

2.3.3.1 Psychosocial similarities

Some people may ask whether South Africa, with its vastness and its potentialities, and Rwanda, with its smallness and its economic problems, are really comparable. On one level, the answer should be negative. However, if the two countries are considered in their African context with particular consideration of their historical realities, it becomes simple to find very specific common denominators at the social and psychological levels.

♠ In terms of social aspects, it is important to recognise the particular dimension of human life in the African context. In contrast to the ever-increasing spirit of individualism in industrialised countries, the traditional culture of communal solidarity has remained surprisingly characteristic of social life in Africa, especially in the rural areas. As stated by Mulemfo (2000: 55), *"African people have quite a strong sense of social responsibility. The emphasis is put on the group rather than on the individual."* Such a spirit still prevails and is helping to shape social life and to strengthen the "sense of identity" on the basis of social structures such as the family, the clan, and the community.

In South Africa, this same spirit is translated through the fundamental value of "**Ubuntu**"⁶ while in Rwanda, the value of "**Ubumuntu** and **Ubumwe**"⁷ is virtually

⁶ "Mandela and Archbishop Tutu both often spoke of Ubuntu, an African concept of human brotherhood, mutual responsibility, and compassion. This was often linked to the proverb **Umuntu**

obligatory. In Kinyarwanda, there is a proverb that states: "**Inkingi imwe ntigera inzu**" or "One pillar cannot sustain a house alone", which means that no one can pretend to address serious problems endangering his/her life without benefiting from the cooperation of others, especially those living in close proximity.

Despite the fact that this kind of social organisation has been progressively distorted over time because of various factors (colonisation, apartheid, genocide, industrialisation and so on), it is advisable for South Africa and Rwanda to rely firmly on this positive "sense of community" in order to strive for sustainable social development.

♠ Relating to the psychological level, South Africa and Rwanda have similarly experienced really traumatic events. In this connection, examples abound and the main ones are highlighted by President Paul Kagame of the Republic of Rwanda who specifies:

*"Both South Africa and Rwanda suffered decades of state-inspired terror and injustice inflicted on our peoples. Both countries suffered from bad governance and government policies that encouraged mistrust, hatred and suspicion between communities. In both countries, hundreds of thousands of people were forced to flee their motherland because of state-orchestrated repression. South Africa experienced tens of thousands of brutal extra-judicial killings, while Rwanda suffered repeated genocide. The difference lies in the fact that while, in 1994, South Africa ushered in a new democratic dispensation, the ruling regime in Rwanda put into practice its philosophy of ethnic hatred that saw up to a million Rwandan people perish in a matter of one hundred days."*⁸

ngumuntu ngabantu, which translates as 'A person is a person because of other people.' Tutu interpreted the proverb as referring to gentleness, compassion, hospitality, openness to others, and knowing that one's life is closely bound to all other lives" (Beck, 2000: 196).

⁷ These terms refer to the necessity for people to be characterised by the sense of '**humanity**' and to be **united**, to favour a common action through the spirit of **solidarity** in order to face any kind of problem.

⁸ President Kagame, P. 2000 (18 October). Remarks at State Banquet in honour of H.E Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa. Kigali.

It is so evident that the two countries have a lot to share, particularly in how to heal the damaged hearts of their peoples and to struggle for the unity and reconciliation that are important prerequisites for any move towards facilitating social development.

2.3.3.2 Social development profile: South Africa and Rwanda compared

In the aftermath of apartheid and genocide in South Africa and Rwanda respectively, each new government has been dealing with the problems of rehabilitation, reconstruction, social reintegration, reconciliation and the improvement of the requisites of a better life. These requisites include income level, purchasing power, equal distribution of wealth, social justice, human rights, democracy, environmental protection and peace.

With reference not only to the aggregate indicators such as GNP and GDP but also, and most importantly, by focusing on human development indicators (life expectancy, health, education, Human Development Index and so forth), the table below presents some specific figures. These figures allow us to understand the state of the situation in terms of social development, to perceive the successes and weaknesses in each country, and to deduce lessons for possible improvement, promotion or experimentation of specific strategies in the best interests of the citizens and of vulnerable people in particular.

The figures are taken from:

- a) UNDP. 1999. *Human Development Report 1999*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- b) UNDP. 2002. *Human Development Report 2002*. (From Internet: <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2002/en/indicator/indicator.cfm?File=index.html>)

MHDC means Medium Human Development Countries

LHDC means Low Human Development Countries.

Table 4: State of human development in South Africa and Rwanda

Year and country ^a Indicator	1999				2002	
	MHDC	South Africa	LHDC	Rwanda	South Africa	Rwanda
1. Human Development Index (HDI)						
- HDI Rank	-	101	-	164	107	162
- Life expectancy at birth (years)	66.6	54.7	50.6	40.5	52.1	40.2
- Adult literacy rate (%)	75.9	84.0	48.5	63.0	85.3	66.8
- Gross enrolment ratio (%)	64	93.0	39	43	93	40
- Education index	0.72	0.87	0.45	0.56	0.88	0.58
- HDI	0,662	0,695	0,416	0,379	0,695	0,403
- GDI (Gender related Development Index) value	0,658	0,689	0,404	-	0,689	0,398
- People not expected to survive to age 40 (%)	11.9	23.4	32.3	46.1	-	-
2. Economic trends						
- GDP p.c (PPP US \$)	3,327	7,380	982	660	9,401	943
- GDP index	0.58	0.72	0.38	0.31	-	0.37
- GDP – HDI (Ranks)	-	- 47	-	6	- 56	- 6
- Official development assistance received (US \$ mil)	-	497	-	592	487.5	322.0
3. Demographic trends						
- Total population (millions)	-	38.8	-	6.0	43.3	7.2
- population growth rate (%)	1.8	2.1	2.7	1.4	2.1	2.2
- Urban population (%)	41.2	49.7	27.5	5.8	56.9	6.2
- AIDS cases (per 100 000) ^b	17	29.6	67.5	204.9	20.10	8.88
- Infant mortality (per 1000 live births)	51	49	106	105	55	100
4. Other indicators						
- Electricity (p.c kilowatt-h)	1,147	3,888	91	32	3,776	-
- Sanitation facilities (% pop)	-	-	-	-	86	8
- Female economic activity rate (as % of male rate)	69.0	59.4	72.4	93.2	59	89
- Women in Parliament (%)	10	28.4	8.9	17.1	29.8	25.7

^a *The figures refer very often to the periods prior to the year in which the report was produced. For 1999, the figures are mainly taken from the statistics of 1997, while for 2002, most are from 2000 or 2001. The figures could also vary depending on the source of information used by UNDP.*

^b *The figures for 1999 are from the years prior to 1997 while those for 2002 relate to the percentage of people (15-49 years) living with HIV/AIDS.*

It emerges from these figures that South Africa is healthier than Rwanda on many socio-economic levels. In general, South Africa maintains above average levels for several indicators of the MHDC. On the economic level, the South African performances are undoubtedly due to the country's wealth of natural resources, to its developed industrial sector and to the expansion of its trading relationships with other countries or organisations after it had overcome decades of apartheid and international economic isolation.

Regarding the human development indicators, some appreciable South African achievements (e.g. in education, health and sanitation) are probably the result of the government's commitment to adopting and implementing strong social welfare policies. Indeed, these policies have been promoting equality of opportunity and equity in providing basic social services (mainly with social grants programmes). Consequently, the living conditions of the historically disadvantaged people and vulnerable groups have been improving.

The figures relating to Rwanda are manifestly low but there is room for encouragement in the levels reached in some specific domains such as the positive change in HDI, in education and in the slight improvement in women's conditions. The economic recovery has been constant since 1994 when real GDP declined by 50%. GDP "*rebounded by 34,4% in 1995 and 15,8% in 1996, and continued its rapid expansion in 1997 and 1998, growing by 12,8% and 9,5%, respectively*" (Rwanda, IMF & World Bank, 1999: 5).

Finally, it is very important to bear in mind that the positive socio-economic changes, whether of high, moderate or low value, that have been taking place in both countries are in great part based on the increasing recovery of security and peace and above all, on the continuous reconciliation process that constitutes a sine qua non for the creation of confidence among people and their effective participation in development. In

connection with the latter factor, the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa in 1995 and the Commission for National Unity and Reconciliation in Rwanda in 1998 serve as good examples of the commitment of both governments to the creation of "a new reality" in their respective countries. Various practical initiatives have been strengthening such a process in Rwanda, in particular the regular organisation of "INGANDO"⁹ or "Solidarity Camps". The launch, very recently, of GACACA Courts (See **Chapter 4**) on 19/6/02 is a further example. These courts supplement the formal courts that are quite incapable of processing unaided the more than 120 000 cases of people who "are still in Rwandan jails awaiting trial for genocide".

However, these "praises" have to be tempered as South Africa and Rwanda still have – one way or another and probably at different levels – a lot to do in order to attain prosperity for all their citizens. The section below gives clarification on this situation.

2.3.3.3 Conclusion: Challenges and need for social development in Rwanda and South Africa

Referring to the figures in Table 4, it is evident that a long and arduous journey lies ahead to improve social welfare conditions. Taking the example of HPI (Human Poverty Indicator) and targeting only longevity, it appears that the vulnerability to death at an early age is relatively high, particularly in Rwanda. Furthermore, the GDP-HDI (Ranks) remains negative and deteriorates in South Africa. This means that the HDI rank is higher than the GDP per capita (PPP \$) rank. In other words, the problem of social development is serious because these figures demonstrate that a large number of people do not benefit from the economic growth and thus, *"... their income is low and will remain low no matter how rapidly the economy expands, unless they are willing and/or permitted to play a meaningful role"* (Roux, 1999: 44-45).

⁹ INGANDO refer to organised Camps lasting for a variable period (relatively three months) and that serve as useful channel of learning about the history of the country, unity and reconciliation, patriotism, sustainable development and so forth. They target different categories of people, particularly the youth and repatriated persons (refugees and soldiers of the ex-Rwandan army).

South Africa and Rwanda are, respectively, classified among medium and low countries in the human development indices. Each of them would like to make progress and be placed among the top countries, in time to come. Is this a dream or an achievable goal? Logically, the effort in this regard does not seem to be simple, especially for Rwanda. On the other hand, succeeding is not impossible. South Africa, as well as Rwanda, has to defeat poverty, HIV/AIDS, unemployment, trauma, mistrust, and the increasing vulnerability of specific groups such as children, youth and women. Briefly, they have to commit themselves to *"an alternative development guided by the three basic principles of authentic development: justice, sustainability and inclusiveness..."* (David Korten, quoted by Allen and Thomas, 2000: 32-33).

In other words, there is a great need to promote social development in these countries. This entails unifying efforts at all levels and coordinating existing resources with the ultimate objective of making a difference to the lives of especially the poor and those suffering from all kinds of social ills. The results will be more successful when those disadvantaged or impoverished people have really become enabled and progressively become "self-made persons". To make this happen, the operation must be carried out on various fronts and the operatives must cooperate firmly, each one contributing his/her expertise. What will specialists in social work provide in order to expand access to a better life? The following chapter intends to respond to this question.

Chapter 3 Potential of social work in promoting social development

This chapter offers an understanding of social work and its concern for social development. It also presents the main methods of social work, and provides an overview of the evolution of social work as a profession and discipline, with particular reference to South Africa and Rwanda. Finally, the chapter offers the opportunity to examine the challenges of social work and highlights the importance of moving towards the developmental perspective in order to deal more effectively with the problems of service users.

3.1 Social work and its concern for social development

3.1.1 Definition, values and principles

Social work is a modern profession, but its task of rendering help is as old as the human race itself. In the Oxford English dictionary, 2nd Ed., Vol XV, Simpson (1989: 912) states that social work is a *"work of benefit to those in need of help, especially professional or voluntary service of specialized nature concerned with community welfare and family or social problems arising mainly from poverty, mental or physical handicap, maladjustment, delinquency, etc."*. In other words, social work is a profession for those with a strong desire to help people, to promote social change, and to make a positive difference. According to Zastrow (1999: 5), social work is the *"professional activity of helping individuals, groups, or communities to enhance or restore their capacity for social functioning and to create societal conditions favorable to their goals"*.

In short, social work is a profession *"concerned about wholes, parts and relationships between these"* (Connaway & Gentry, 1988: 2) within a dynamic social context. A comprehensive definition of social work is of great significance for the purpose of this study. Although it is difficult to find one, the definition adopted by the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) in July 2000 seems to be adequate. It is formulated as follows: *"The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social*

work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work."

Social work is based on a foundation of social values tied to a set of principles that should be respected in the interest of achieving the purposes of the profession. With reference to Levy (1973), Potgieter (1998) considers three categories of (social) values. Here, the values are understood as guides to behaviour that evolve from personal experiences and are modified as experiences accumulate to provide new challenges and opportunities. These categories are:

- a) Values as ways to view people: value orientations that provide specific views on people and their environment;
- b) Values as dreams or ideals for people: values that express specific ideals or end states for people; and
- c) Values as ways to deal with people. These values could be assimilated to principles that are generally truths and prescriptions for action – the beliefs about people and life conditions. These principles help in fact to operationalise the above core values and serve as guidelines that inform the way professionals think and act, or that prescribe how to treat people.

Potgieter provides detailed distinctions of the categories as follows:

Table 5: Social work values and principles

<i>Values as ways to view people</i>	<i>Values as ways to deal with people</i>	<i>Values as dreams or ideals for people</i>
	Principles	
<i>Worth and dignity</i>	<i>Individualisation</i>	<i>Equity</i>
<i>Diversity and uniqueness</i>	<i>Acceptance</i>	<i>Democracy</i>
<i>Capacity to grow and a drive for change</i>	<i>Controlled emotional involvement</i>	
<i>Need to belong</i>	<i>Non-judgemental attitude</i>	<i>Social justice</i>
<i>Responsibility towards self and fellow human beings</i>	<i>Self-determination</i>	
	<i>Accountability</i>	

These guidelines, prescriptions or foundations for the adequate practice of social work could conflict with personal thoughts and beliefs and can vary from one social context to another. Accordingly, social work professionals as helpers of individuals, families and communities, are supposed to manifest particular characteristics¹⁰ including:

- ♦ Awareness of self and values;
- ♦ Awareness of cultural experiences;
- ♦ Ability to analyse the helper's own feelings;
- ♦ Ability to serve as Model and Influencer;
- ♦ Altruism and compassion;
- ♦ Strong sense of Ethics;
- ♦ Responsibility and ability to empower others.

3.1.2 Concern of social work for social development

Since its beginnings over a century ago, social work practice has focused on meeting human needs and developing human potential. Social work in its various forms addresses the multiple, complex transactions between people and their environments. The mission of social work is to enable all people to develop their full potential, enrich their lives, and prevent dysfunctions. In particular, the social work profession strives to alleviate poverty and to liberate vulnerable and oppressed people, and to promote social inclusion. It emphasises specific values and these are based on respect for the equality, worth, and dignity of all people as shown in Table 5. (Adapted from the International Federation of Social Workers "IFSW", 2000)

In this connection, it is important to bear in mind that:

- ♦ social work is an ongoing process working closely with individuals, groups and communities to support them in finding solutions to the difficulties they face in their lives.

¹⁰ For more details, see Brammer & MacDonald (1999: 36-47).

- ♦ Social work bases its activities on the involvement of beneficiaries in the problem-solving process; it is participative, solving problems *with* people rather than *for* them.
- ♦ Social work has a particular responsibility to the vulnerable in the community in order to enable them to manage the problems they face.
- ♦ The ultimate objective of social work is to effect an improvement in the welfare of the whole of society, referring to an overall principle that could be defined as “helping to build a just and good society”. (Adapted from University College Cork “UCC”, Child Studies Unit–Rwanda, 1999).

In terms of the social development definition previously adopted, it is evident that social work contributes appreciably to social development. It has definitely become incumbent on social work to include social development as part of its values, knowledge and practice as social welfare should ultimately lead to a “materialisation of social development”. In other words, the social work profession serves as a means for the “operationalisation of social development”. This latter term has indeed been inspiring social work throughout its evolution even though the term seems to have several connotations because *"sometimes the term has signified a philosophical worldview, at times a process, sometimes a goal, other times a model of practice or an outcome"* (Meinert et al., 1994: 25). Briefly, social development should be considered "a principal organising framework for guiding social work as a practice and a profession".

3.1.3 Social work: roles and effectiveness

It emerges from what has been discussed so far that social work is among the important helping professions that strive constantly for the improvement of the living conditions of individuals, families and communities. Social work's uniqueness resides in its focus on the social¹¹ and its mediating role: it goes beyond what is immediately

¹¹ The term "**social**" refers to the links or relationships that exist between different components of society. Accordingly, every human being is usually in interaction with other individuals, and lives within a distinctive social system, such as the family and community, because it is impossible for them to survive on their own.

visible or what service users need, and pursues the improvement of the social functioning of people within specific contexts.

Hokenstad and Midgley (1997: 66) highlight another potential strength of social work, namely the scope of its strategies that ranges from interpersonal to societal levels of intervention and embrace empowerment of individuals, families and communities as well as advocacy with organisations on behalf of clients. The implementation of these strategies applies to a set of fields such as poverty, family breakdown, violence against women and children, child abuse and neglect, isolated elderly people, criminal behaviour, trauma, vagrancy and disease. For the best fulfilment of the profession's obligations, social workers are specifically trained in a manner that equips them to participate effectively in the improvement of social welfare conditions. Social workers act as advocates, policy analysts, administrators, activists, educators, counsellors, facilitators, mediators, organisers and researchers and all these roles respond to the needs of social development.

3.2 Main methods of social work

There is a range of documents devoted to the subject of methods of social work and it is quite impossible to refer to all of them in a presentation as short as this. Accordingly, Bernstein and Gray (1997: 17-22) and Zastrow (1999: 22-24) have been chosen from among several other recent authors for their clear discussion that has contributed significantly to organising ideas on this point. However, it needs to be mentioned that their understanding is, in many respects, similar to that of other social work authors such as Richmond (1944), Mckendrick (1990), Coulshed (1991), and Netting et al. (1993). Indeed, it is commonly agreed that the practice of social work is best understood at three levels: Micro-level, Mezzo-level or mid-level, and Macro practice level.

Micro-level practice entails working on a one-to-one basis with an individual; at Mezzo-level, practitioners work with families and other small groups while at Macro-level, they are concerned with organisations, social institutions and communities or seek to effect changes in statutes and social policies.

a) Micro- practice in social work

Micro-practice refers to social casework and case management. Social casework concerns the smallest units of society and encompasses individuals, individuals in small groups and families. Casework may be geared to helping the client adjust to his or her environment or to changing certain social and economic pressures that are adversely affecting the individual.

Barker (in Zastrow, 1999: 23) defines case management as a "*procedure to plan, seek, and monitor services from different social agencies and staff on behalf of the client.*" In a certain sense, the tasks performed by case managers are somehow similar to those of caseworkers. But the former are more interested in locating different resources that could help the service user within the community while the ultimate objective of the latter is to help the client to solve the social problem(s) for him/herself according to the resources available.

In this connection, Hepworth and Larsen (quoted by Zastrow, 1999: 22) describe the role of a case manager as follows: "*Case managers link clients to needed resources that exist in complex service delivery networks and orchestrate the delivery of services in a timely fashion. Case managers function as brokers, facilitators, linkers, mediators, and advocates. A case manager must have extensive knowledge of community resources, rights of clients, and policies and procedures of various agencies and must be skillful in mediation and advocacy.*"

b) Mezzo- practice in social work

At this level, a distinction can be drawn between group work, group therapy and family therapy. All these refer normally to formal groups and complex organisations within which people function but which differ in purpose or objectives. Group work aims at creating appreciative atmosphere and at strengthening relationships among members of these groups in order to attain specific objective(s) (socialisation, information exchange, curbing delinquency, reviewing values, etc.) through various activities that help to further the intellectual, emotional, and social development of the individual members.

The aim of group therapy is to facilitate the social, behavioural, and emotional adjustment of individuals through the group process. That is to say, participants in group therapy usually come to the process because of emotional, interactional, or behavioural difficulties. In contrast to one-to-one counselling, group therapy is very helpful especially in that individuals can influence and release one another through the expression of personal and shared feelings. Practically, group therapy is a time saver as it enables the therapist to treat several people simultaneously.

Family therapy is a type of group therapy aimed at helping families with interactional, behavioural, and emotional problems. Numerous problems are dealt with in family therapy or family counselling and at present, there is no doubt that it should be very helpful in coping with various cases resulting from inter-generational conflicts.

c) Macro- practice in social work

The macro-practice level expresses the more usual terminology of community work or community organisation for certain people. According to Bernstein and Gray (1996: 19), *"the community becomes an important unit of analysis and a major locus or site of change"*. Here, the role of community workers/community organisers aims at *"encouraging and fostering citizen participation, coordinating efforts between agencies or groups, public relations and public education, research, planning, and being a resource person"* (Zastrow, 1999: 23). The social workers act as catalysts in stimulating and encouraging community action. More concretely and referring to Barker (cited by Zastrow, 1999: 24), community organisation/community work consists of an *"intervention process used by social workers and other professionals to help individuals, groups, and collectives of people with common interests or from the same geographic areas to deal with social problems and to enhance social well-being through planned collective action"*.

At this broadest level, social workers act within a multidimensional context and have to play a specific and well-defined role for the enhancement of social welfare conditions, especially in favour of disadvantaged or oppressed groups. In such a way, they may be real agents of social change, act as advocates and planners, and participate in social policy-making or social policy change. In short, social workers at this level are involved in social policy analysis and administrative functions.

Usually, policy analysis involves the systematic evaluation of a policy and the process by which it was formulated. In other words, policy analysts have to compare policy objectives with outcomes and frequently, identify shortcomings in the policy and then recommend modifications that are designed to improve the situation.

In terms of administration, Zastrow (1999: 24) states that it *"involves directing the overall program of a social service agency. Administrative functions include setting agency program objectives, analyzing social conditions in the community, making decisions about what services will be provided, employing and supervising staff members, setting up organizational structures, administering financial affairs, and securing funds for the agency's operations. Administration also involves setting organizational goals, coordinating activities to achieve the selected goals, monitoring and making necessary changes in processes and structure to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of processes that contribute to transforming social policy into social services."*

It emerges from this quotation that social workers may be considered as social managers as the term "administration" in social work is more and more used synonymously with "management".

These are the main approaches used by social workers – at least generalist social workers – in their professional activities. However, it is opportune to mention that it is in their interest also to be skilled in other areas such as research (especially participatory research), planning, consultation and supervision. In brief, social workers are expected *"to have an extensive knowledge base and numerous skills and to adhere to a well-defined set of professional social work values"* (Zastrow, 1999: 24).

3.3 Historical development of social work

3.3.1 General development

Contrary to what some ill-informed people believe or say, social work has been evolving both as an important profession and a specific scientific discipline. Fundamentally, social work developed in America and England and progressively expanded in other areas around the world. Social work is of relatively recent origin. To begin with, it was relatively informal and not well coordinated. In fact,

"the first social welfare agencies appeared in urban areas in the early 1800s. These agencies, or services, were private and were developed primarily at the initiative of the clergy and religious groups. Until the early 1900s, these services were provided exclusively by the clergy and affluent 'do-gooders' who had no formal training and little understanding of human behavior or of how to help people. The focus of these private services was on meeting such basic physical needs as food and shelter and on attempting to cure emotional and personal difficulties with religious admonitions." (Zastrow, 1999: 4-5)

An illustrative example of an early social welfare organisation very often cited is the Society for the Prevention of Pauperism founded by John Griscom in 1820. This society investigated the habits and circumstances of the poor, suggested plans by which the poor could help themselves, and encouraged the poor to save and economise. One of the remedies used was house-to-house visitation.

The roots of formal or structured social work are normally traced to the work of the Charity Organisation Society (COS) and the Settlement Movement in the late nineteenth century. The COS was started in Buffalo, New York, in 1877 and soon thereafter was rapidly adopted in many American cities. In Charity Organisation Societies, private agencies joined together to:

- provide direct services to individuals and families (promotion of social casework and of family counselling approaches);
- plan and coordinate the efforts of private agencies to meet pressing urban social problems (emergence of community organisation and social planning approaches).

The main procedure of the COS was the extensive use of volunteer "friendly visitors" to work with those in difficulty. The friendly visitors – mostly women – were

primarily "donors of good works", as they generally gave sympathy rather than money and encouraged the poor to save and to seek employment.

Regarding the settlement houses, Toynbee Hall was the first to be established in 1884 in London. Many others were soon formed (1886) in larger United States (US) cities. As stated by Young and Ashton (quoted by Lymbery, 2001: 370), the Settlement Movement was started from the idea that educated people should combine to provide education and leadership to the poor as means to improve their lives. This approach stemmed from the belief that the environment had a major influence on character, and therefore that a better environment would help to improve people's general ability to maintain themselves.

The fact that skilled and devoted persons were those most needed for rendering adequate services is also shown by Zastrow (1999: 4) who specifies:

"Many of the early settlement house workers were the daughters of ministers. The workers, who were from the middle and upper classes, would live in a poor neighborhood to experience the harsh realities of poverty. Simultaneously, in cooperation with neighborhood residents, they sought to develop ways to improve living conditions. In contrast to friendly visitors, they lived in impoverished neighborhoods and used the missionary approach of teaching residents how to live moral lives and improve their circumstances. They sought to improve housing, health, and living conditions; find jobs; teach English, hygiene, and occupational skills; and change environmental surroundings through cooperative efforts. Settlement houses used change techniques that are now called social group work, social action, and community organization."

Jane Addams, of Hull House in Chicago, the most noted leader in the Settlement House Movement, summarised a settlement house as *"an experimental effort to aid in the solution of the social and industrial problems which are engendered by the modern conditions of life in a great city"* (Addams in Zastrow, 1999: 4). Settlement House leaders believed that by changing neighbourhoods, they would improve communities, and through altering communities they would develop a better society.

Progressively, the professionalisation of social work required more and more competent workers. Accordingly, people known as executive secretaries were employed by the COS in the late 1800s, especially on the occasion of administering relief funds programmes. These executive secretaries were specifically charged with

the organisation and training of the friendly visitors and the establishment of the accounting procedures to show accountability for the funds received. In this way, standards and training courses were set up and the New York Charity Organisation Society was the first to offer a course.

Social work as a discipline evolved apace and by 1904, the New York School of Philanthropy offered a one-year programme. Soon after and always in the US, colleges and universities began offering training programmes in social work. At the same time, publications began to flourish and "in 1917 Mary Richmond published ***Social Diagnosis***, a text that presented for the first time a theory and methodology for social work. The book focused on how the worker should intervene with individuals. The process is still used today and involves study (collecting information), diagnosis (stating what is wrong), prognosis, and treatment planning (stating what should be done to help clients improve. This book was important as it formulated a common body of knowledge for casework." (Zastrow, 1999: 5)

In the 1920s, Freud's theories of personality development and therapy – and even the orientation of psychiatrists – influenced social workers. At this time, social workers emphasised intrapsychic processes and focused on enabling clients to adapt and adjust to their social situations. During three decades at least, psychotherapeutic approaches were dominant.

After this, in the 1960s, sociological approaches became preferred because of the increase in status of sociology – a very influential discipline – and the rising awareness that social institutions are of great relevance in meeting the needs of the population. At this time, it became a priority to switch to the family system as a means of progressing to the general person-in-environment context.

During the 1970s and later, the above orientation became somewhat stale and the consequence for social work was to pull together the dichotomies 'Psychoanalytic theory-family in context' and, according to Meinert et al. (1994: 41), to promote the systems theory providing a means of treatment as well as social change. Despite such a positive perspective, the situation has not been changing as expected. In this regard, Meinert et al. (1994: 43) argue:

"The profession of social work has not yet developed an integrated organizing framework for social work practice. We continue to learn from other disciplines and relabel social theories. Without a commonly accepted paradigm to guide our theory and model development and our research efforts, we continue to be buffeted about by politically motivated special interest groups, methodically bound true believers and the ever-present micro-macro disagreement that leads social work in circles... social work has not changed much in its effort to develop its own professional paradigm. We seem stuck ... What is needed in such a situation is a reframe, or a process called a paradigm shift, which involves a complete new way of looking at the part of the world under study."

Since the 1990s, it still seems evident, according to these authors, that the basic person-in-situation paradigm remains a viable organising framework for the profession. In this paradigm, it is important not to view the person as an island and to consider the social problems he/she faces not just as personal troubles but more broadly as social issues.

Finally, there is no doubt that the pathway leading to a holistic approach is the one most suited to social work practice. The holistic approach entails a rigorous training of professionals who have to embrace – at a certain level – several domains, to understand the life context of the service users, to be "*communicatively competent*" and hence, to be socially well informed. Accordingly, they will be able to cope with the growing social problems that are of increasing complexity and global in scope. Complete success will depend on the changes in social work education and thus, "*social work academics, as the profession's gatekeepers, are responsible to educate and train new social workers to practice in (this) global economy while at the same time retaining the important values, knowledge and skills that belong uniquely to the social work profession.*" (Bisman, C.D et al., 2000: 9)

3.3.2 Social work in South Africa and Rwanda: development and concerns in the African context

3.3.2.1 Historical overview of social work in South Africa

South Africa has been undergoing various social trends similar to those experienced overseas and its social workers are faced with the same modern-day issues especially

those relating to the professionalism of their essential work. For this reason, it will not be necessary to describe in detail the emergence and evolution of social work in South Africa because there is a close resemblance to the outline given above. However, a few selected milestones in the development of social welfare and social work in the country will be highlighted.

It must be borne in mind that the provision of social welfare services in South Africa has almost always been influenced by socio-political ideals. Consequently this provision has been influenced for a long time by racist motives – more or less at certain periods – because of the conviction of the government power. This situation prevailed until the advent of democratic governance in 1994.

Essential milestones are as follows¹²:

- Before white settlement: traditional forms of care based on the firm solidarity and complementarity between indigenous communities.
- During the century and a half after the arrival in 1652 of the Dutch East India Company at the Cape of Good Hope: lack of active role by colonial and republican governments in the provision of social welfare services while the traditional system of life was being disturbed.
- Since the 1800s: slight improvement in the situation, and promulgation of various laws that brought about better circumstances especially for workers (e.g. Law of Friendly Societies of 1882 insuring the provision of financial assistance and provision of food to the needy).
- Towards the end of the 1860s: discovery of minerals and extensive urbanisation that led to difficulties in adaptation to city life, and thus to the increase of poverty amongst both white and black communities.
- 1899-1902: the South African War.
- 1902-1910: the British Administration institutes some legislation and establishes some commissions but favours the poor whites to the detriment of other racial groups.

¹² This has been adapted with reference to Beck (2000), Gray (1998), Van Eeden (2000) and the South African Council for Social Service Professions "SACSSP" (1999).

- 1911-1948: after various perturbations, due especially to the opposition between the South African Party (SAP) created in 1910 and the National Party (NP) created in 1914, a structured government focus on social welfare service is established. The year 1937 stands out as an important reference point in terms of this general structured selective welfare focus by the government and the rendering of welfare services to other groups, but with the whites enjoying privileges. It is also important to mention that social work education was launched at university level in the 1920s and furthermore, there was a vigorous expression of the need to establish a professional control in social work in 1942.
- 1950s: commencement of the further separation of welfare services (for Coloureds and Indians; Blacks had already been separated).
- 1960s: official establishment of separate government departments with each racial group being expected to take responsibility for its own social welfare services whilst policy development and direct control of assistance are retained by the white central government. As regards the social work profession, the idea launched in 1942 is reinforced and a workgroup is assigned to determine the modalities for registration of social workers.
- 1970: the South African government's homeland policy takes effect and this further manages black South Africans' welfare interests in a separate but inferior way.
- 1978: approval by Parliament of the act for the establishment of the South African Council for Social Work.
- 1980s: Coloureds and Indians are accommodated within a new constitutional dispensation and thus become able to manage for themselves the welfare function of government among their own people. Black welfare is still subordinate to government. In terms of the social work profession, there is a serious theoretical confrontation especially concerning traditional social work approaches and radical social work theory.
- By the 1990s: primary welfare services are well established and co-operation between national, regional and local government enjoys further attention.

- 1996: establishment of an Interim-Council for Social Work with the special mission to make recommendations on the new role of the Council taking into account the necessary expansion of the scope of social work.
- 1999: the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SASSP) is launched.

Finally, it is important to note that the social work trends today are strongly influenced by the socio-political and economic contexts in the country. In this regard, the new orientations favour the developmental approaches and it remains to be seen how these will be put into action. In any case, the present government's firm determination is to overcome the shortcomings of the past discriminatory social welfare policies, to promote partnership between different stakeholders and thus to conduct a comprehensive war against poverty and multiple other "social ills". Above all, emphasis is on mobilising efforts to create a caring society, to empower people and to make them progressively responsible for their own destinies.

3.3.2.2 The situation in Rwanda¹³

The development of social work in Rwanda has been characterised by a number of key events and social changes. In pre-colonial times, well-established informal kinship and community structures existed which provided basic support to those affected by death, disease, or hunger. The family and community were the focal points of society and an extensive network of obligations and duties were associated with these kinship ties. The first formal or state structures for social welfare were introduced by the Belgian colonisers and some of the most important events in the evolution of social work in Rwanda are as follows:

- In 1949: establishment of the first social club of Astrida (Butare Province) by Belgian missionaries. This club was to help women and young girls from rural areas adapt to the conditions and stresses of urban life.
- During the 1950s: expansion of social clubs to rural areas. These clubs always targeted women in the belief that educating women provided certain benefits to

¹³ This section is developed with reference to UCC/Child Studies Unit, Rwanda (1999) and to information from MINALOC (Ministry charged with Social Affairs) gained during the field research.

society in general. Missionaries provided training essentially in practical activities such as sewing, embroidery, hygiene and so forth.

- In 1956: establishment of Karubanda Social School in Butare. The training in this school emphasised a certain number of issues: feeding, hygiene, obstetrics and nursing, family and social life, literacy skills, cookery, sewing, knitting and gardening, community development, etc. In short, the programmes were conceived mainly to enhance the ability of women to care and provide for their families.
- 1962: 75 social clubs already established in rural communes were staffed by the first Assistant Social Workers (ASW), graduates from Karubanda.
- 1965: the role of ASWs shifted slightly and their mandate was expanded to include working in hospitals, health centres and in development projects.
- In 1968: institution of two different training programmes at Karubanda for two categories of ASWs. Firstly, there were the Social Monitors (SM) who underwent a five year training cycle and secondly, the ASWs who received seven years of training.
- During the early years of the 1970s, social welfare output was manifestly visible with the establishment of a total of 366 social clubs at communal level and 644 employees who were working on community based programmes for women.
- With the advent of the 2nd Republic in 1973, the social clubs were replaced by "Les Centres Sociaux de Développement" (CSD) (Communal Training Centres) with the objective to extend activities to the men.
- 1975: Creation of "Les Centres Communaux de Stage" (CCS) (Communal Training Centres) by the authorities of the Catholic Church in Nyakabanda, Gitarama. The aim of these centres was to train 4 representatives per ten families within a given neighbourhood (a man, a woman and two teenagers, one girl and one boy) and the trainees, in turn, had to transmit the skills acquired to their respective peers.
- 1977: the Cabinet decides on the establishment of a unit of broad capacity for people-centred and sustainable development, namely "Centre Communal de Développement et de Formation Permanente" (CCDFP) (Communal Centre for

Development and Permanent Training). The Cabinet's decision established also a unit at Prefectural level with the name of CPDFP (Centre Préfectoral de Développement et de Formation Permanente).

- 1978: the CSD is integrated into the CCDFP
- 1979: restructuring of the education system leading to the creation of a number of new secondary level social schools. Social schools were opened at Byumba, Rwaza, Rulindo and Rambura and by 1987, the number of ASWs had increased significantly. Theoretically, this increase could have helped to serve the population in a number of areas. However, the ASWs have not always been satisfactorily deployed and thus society has not been benefiting adequately from their competence.

As can be seen, responsibility for the social welfare of the community has changed from being regarded as the sole responsibility of family and the extended family, to an important role of Government; and from a focus on women and girls to a responsibility for all (vulnerable) groups in the community.

- During the 1990s and especially within the context of the atrocities of war and the genocide of 1994, there has been a marked shift in terms of the client base of social work. In fact, the number and type of vulnerable groups have increased dramatically and accordingly, social work remains one of the professions that needs to be promoted seriously for the reconstruction, rehabilitation and long-term development processes in Rwanda.
- 1997-1998 (academic year): establishment of the social work option within the Department of Social Sciences at the National University of Rwanda (NUR). The first intake of students will be awarded degrees in December 2002.

3.3.2.3 Special concerns for social development in South Africa and Rwanda: considerations within the African context and the globalising world

South Africa and Rwanda have each suffered from the tyranny of their history and it is evident that they are on a long journey of reconciliation and transformation. These challenges are complicated by a range of others shared worldwide because, as

observed by Van Soest (1998: xv): "... *many social problems are no longer personal or local or national, they are global in scope. Human distress caused by crime, drugs, terrorism, pollution, war, poverty and disease knows no national borders.*"

Thus, people around the world are becoming more and more interconnected. They have come to live, as is commonly expressed, in a global village. At the same time, countries, communities, families, even individuals, are linked to global problems.

More particularly, the effects of such global ills (e.g. the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the USA) aggravate directly or indirectly the situation of poor economies, especially in Africa, and worst of all is that destitute people are the most affected. Tackling all these problems or facing the increasing challenges from globalisation requires Africans, and African leaders in particular, to find original solutions. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), for example, could provide both the vision and framework in which African countries and peoples could collaborate and play an active role in the world economy and body politic.

It appears so obvious that, in addition to their uniqueness as previously described, South Africa and Rwanda do not constitute single countries, rather, they are in the same boat with other members of this changing world, a boat that is moving across a whirlpool. To escape from this situation, regional and global interventions are needed but the specific role of these two countries is very fundamental. More explicitly, Rwanda and South Africa have to struggle energetically, extricate themselves from the malaise of socio-economic problems and implement unprecedented social development. While torn between the global order and local pressures, they have to exercise a sound choice. It would certainly be suitable for them to thoroughly examine the global conceptions of development and to apply these prudently in a manner that does not exacerbate the situation of the vulnerable. Could the progressive shift from the orthodox approach to the alternative view of development be beneficial for them? An analysis of some differences between these views of development, by means of the table below, could probably help to answer the question.

Table 6: The orthodox versus the alternative view of development

<i>Criteria for differentiation</i>	<i>The orthodox view</i>	<i>The alternative view</i>
<i>Poverty</i>	<i>A situation suffered by people who do not have the money to buy food and satisfy other basic material needs</i>	<i>A situation suffered by people who are not able to meet their material and non-material needs through their own efforts</i>
<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Transformation of traditional subsistence economies defined as 'backward' into industrial, commodified economies defined as 'modern'. Production of surplus. Individuals sell their labour for money, rather than producing to meet their family's needs.</i>	<i>Creation of human well-being through sustainable societies in social, cultural, political and economic terms.</i>
<i>Core ideas and assumptions</i>	<i>The possibility of unlimited economic growth in a free-market system. Economies would reach a 'take-off' point and thereafter wealth would trickle down to those at the bottom. Superiority of the 'Western' model and knowledge. Belief that the process would ultimately benefit everyone. Domination, exploitation of nature.</i>	<i>Sufficiency. The inherent value of nature, cultural diversity and the community-controlled commons (water, land, air, forest). Human activity in balance with nature. Self-reliance. Democratic inclusion, participation, for example, voice for marginalised groups. e.g. women, indigenous groups. Local control.</i>
<i>Measurement</i>	<i>Economic growth; Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita: industrialisation, including agriculture.</i>	<i>Fulfilment of basic material and non-material human needs of everyone; condition of the natural environment. Political empowerment of marginalised.</i>
<i>Process</i>	<i>Top-down; reliance on 'expert knowledge', usually Western and definitely external; large capital investments in large projects; advanced technology; expansion of the private sphere.</i>	<i>Bottom-up; participatory; reliance on appropriate (often local) knowledge and technology; small investments in small-scale projects; protection of the commons.</i>

Source: Baylis and Smith (2001: 563).

The social development advocates, including social workers, embrace the alternative view of development for it favours mainly participation by the people, and meaningful self-determination for all; it integrates particularly the vulnerable in the whole development process and ultimately, establishes for them an equitable share of the development outcome.

Development/globalisation with a human face is commonly becoming a major concern for most people in the 21st century but unfortunately, if one considers the obsessive desire for social, cultural, political, and economic domination not only between societies but also within each society, the conclusion is that a good number of people pursue only their own interests and still believe in “the survival of the fittest”.

Thus, to bring about change in South Africa and Rwanda requires all the development agents – with the innately helping and the community building professions at the forefront – to hasten the process of removing the difference between the ideals of their respective societies and the achievements to date. This will entail a rethink of the social order to make the social life as fair as possible, and particularly to promote cooperation among people.

Finally, it falls to different contributors to the change process to adopt and, most importantly, to implement new approaches based on full participation of all citizens with no discrimination.

3.3.3 Necessity of change and adopting new directions: towards developmental social work

The historical review showed that social work began with the efforts of voluntary charity workers who tried to help the victims of poverty created by the mid-nineteenth century industrial revolution. Later, the emergence and application of scientific methods (particularly case work and group work) enriched the helping services, and as a consequence the emphasis was put on the consideration of individuals in their relationships with the environment. Progressively, it was realised that poverty was not a private, but a public issue. This realisation led to the institutionalisation of specialised social programmes, which are generally known as "welfare state programmes".

With the continuing and rapid change of society, social work has been evolving over time in order to meet the ever-increasing and complex needs of people. However, social work has also been frequently faced with various problems that have created real "barricades" to its consolidation as an independent profession. In fact, there has always been strong dissension among social work theorists: some remain traditionalists while others are preoccupied with the future of the profession and especially the definition of its uniqueness.

Since the 1960s and particularly during the three last decades of the twentieth century, sincere debates took place through which a progressive change came about in the language of social work to incorporate the ecological model and systems theory. There are still some practitioners who continue to manifest a certain reluctance to embrace the new thinking. Nevertheless the new orientation does assist in responding more adequately to the purpose of social work, which is "to act for the promotion of social conditions of people and particularly of vulnerable people considered within their whole environment". This is well demonstrated by McKendrick (2001: 108-109) who states:

"Since the late 1970s, social work has had a model to guide practice that is totally consistent with social development, namely the ecosystems approach (Germain & Gitterman, 1980; 1984), which conceives of human beings as evolving, adapting and developing through transaction with all the many environments of which they are part. These adaptive processes, the human being and environment, reciprocally shape each other (Getterman & Germain, 1984: 22). This model provides the rationale and the foundation for redefining the purposes and nature of social work in the context of social development: the focus of social work is not only on changing the individual, or not only on changing the environment, but on both and promoting a better 'fit' between people and environments".

Through the adoption of this holistic approach, ideas have been continuing to grow and from these, a concrete and well-adapted conceptualisation to give a real identity to the profession of social work has emerged and is now expanding positively, particularly in developing countries. Indeed, the concept of "**developmental social work**" becomes more and more not only attractive but also, and above all, well suited to the circumstances within such countries.

According to Gray (1996, 12), developmental social work is understood as a "*type of social work which diverges from the residual, service-oriented approach directed at special categories of people in need to holistic, planned, development strategies which place people and human rights at the centre of social planning... It means basically employing **community development** as a major intervention strategy.*"

Gray continues by indicating that developmental social work promotes the following:

- a people-centred philosophy;
- welfare as a human right;

- the prevention of social problems;
- awareness through education;
- equality of resource distribution and a reduction of inequities in service provision;
- populist forms of intervention, including community development;
- community participation in all stages of care from planning through to evaluation;
- multisectoral work.

In this regard, social work professionals will need to be well prepared and to have a range of skills and knowledge. Furthermore, they are expected to remain conscious of what they do and should respect their clients. Accordingly, there is no doubt that the outcomes in the social development domain will be valuable.

In South Africa, and in Rwanda in particular, such a reorientation is urgently required at this moment as both countries are acutely aware that people are themselves the masters of their own destinies, and hence must be helped to initiate and manage their own development. The developmental approach adopted by the South African government is to be applauded; the various agencies in positions strategic to the guiding and implementing of the development process need to be mindful that they must maintain accountability, keep their promises and deliver on them. For Rwanda, which is proceeding along the same path, the recognition that the country "is poor in material resources but rich in people" must be well understood so that the "ingenious involvement" of those people in the development process will help to achieve prosperity for all.

In one way or another, the input of social workers is awaited and they could particularly focus on:

- ♦ the mobilisation of resources;

- ♦ the organisation of communities for the promotion of development, especially by facilitating the consolidation of social capital with regard to its different dimensions (horizontal linkages; vertical linkages and macro-level linkages);
- ♦ advocacy for vulnerable populations and, more importantly, their empowerment in order to help them to become more productive;
- ♦ the reinforcement of the reconciliation process;
- ♦ the influence of social and environmental policy;
- ♦ participatory research in order to play an adequate role in the prevention of social problems and the promotion of social change.

The roles are really numerous but in all cases, the existence of specific working structures and guiding frameworks, especially in terms of legislation and policy, is very important for the optimal orientation of action plans and the achievement of definite successes. The next chapter will undertake a brief discussion of such legislation and policy.

Chapter 4 Legislation and social welfare policies in South Africa and Rwanda

Introduction

In every society, there usually exist recognised bodies, especially for example, the government, that set up institutional frameworks defining the fundamental values, standards, models, guidelines or norms around which social functioning is shaped. Normally, each domain of activity is organised with reference to specific institutions, guidelines or regulations that determine the way in which people should act for the good of everyone concerned. This chapter examines the social welfare and social security domains in South Africa and Rwanda and aims to introduce the reader to the fundamentals of social welfare policies and legislation in both countries. This introduction should assist an understanding of:

- ♦ what social welfare and social security mean;
- ♦ the foci of social welfare policies and legislation in South Africa and Rwanda, and
- ♦ the relevance of such legal frameworks for the reduction of distress experienced by the vulnerable.

4.1 Definition of social welfare and social security

It is essential that the meaning of social welfare be explicitly understood as continual emphasis will be laid on this concept. At the same time, one of its main components, namely “social security” must also be defined not only because it is focused on throughout this section but also because of the important role it plays in social welfare programmes.

- a) It is stipulated in the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997), South Africa, that **social welfare** refers to an integrated comprehensive system of social services, facilities, programmes and social security to promote social development, social justice and the social functioning of people. In other words, it is the “*nation’s system of programs, benefits, and services that help people meet those social, economic, educational, and health needs that are fundamental to the maintenance of society.*” (Barker cited by Zastrow, 1999: 6)

It could be construed from these definitions that social welfare consists of a system of action whose result is the improvement of the people's quality of life. It denotes the existence of specific organisations working in a planned manner for the promotion of individual, family and community well-being. The social welfare services constitute in a certain sense the "materialisation or manifestation" of social development.

In South Africa, the provision of welfare services occurs through a partnership between the private and public sectors. The country possesses also a rich institutional framework of welfare services delivered by non-governmental organisations (NGOs). In general, the different spheres of government play a guiding and coordinating role while respecting the strict independence of the welfare organisations. The National Department of Welfare remains responsible for the development of national policies, standards and norms, and the setting of priorities and targets. The Provincial Departments of Social Services must follow these national standards in planning, coordinating, regulating, providing and evaluating social welfare and community development services required at provincial and district levels. It falls essentially within the competence of regional officials to make sure that social welfare policies are adequately implemented and to facilitate the social development process in their respective communities.

In Rwanda, it is also the government that determines the national standards guiding the social welfare services disseminated from within different public departments where a range of projects are initiated and run in conjunction with international as well as national NGOs. Globally, the welfare functions are delegated to provincial Directions of Health, Gender and Social Affairs but it is expected that some, if not most of them, will be progressively transferred to the district level in order to serve the communities more closely and independently.

b) In terms of defining **social security**, the Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, South Africa (1997) considers that this concept refers to policies that ensure that all people have adequate economic and social protection during unemployment, ill health, maternity, child rearing, widowhood, disability and old age, by means of contributory and non-contributory schemes for providing for their basic needs.

Normally, there are two main kinds of social security¹⁴: **social insurance** and **social assistance**. Social insurance is applied when an individual makes regular payments to a fund that helps that person when he/she is in need. In contrast, social assistance constitutes what is popularly known as social welfare benefits, and is generally funded by the state in the interest of people who qualify for this provision.

4.2 Legislation and social welfare policies in South Africa¹⁵

Social welfare legislation and policies in South Africa are based on the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). In fact, the RDP has been adopted since 1994 as the country's basic policy framework. It emphasises investment in people towards their empowerment so that they can cater for their own needs and desires. The major concern of the Programme is to combine growth with development and to declare war firmly against poverty. To attain this, it proposed five main strategies¹⁶. These are:

- meeting basic needs;
- upgrading human resources;
- strengthening the economy;
- democratising the state and society; and
- reorganising the state and the public sector.

The RDP goals for a developmental social welfare programme include:

- ♦ attaining basic social welfare rights for all South Africans through the establishment of a democratically determined, just and effective social delivery system;
- ♦ redressing inequalities of the past, especially with regard to women, children, the youth, the disabled, and people in rural communities and developing areas;

¹⁴ For more information, see Klinick (2001: 3-5) and Liebenberg & Pillary (2000: 315-342)

¹⁵ This point is mainly developed with reference to Liebenberg & Pillay (2000: 315-342)

¹⁶ For further comments, see Lodge (1999: 27-39)

- ♦ empowering individuals, families and communities to participate in the process of selecting from the range of needs and problems through local, provincial and national initiatives;
- ♦ recognising the role of organs of civil society in the welfare system, such as non-governmental organisations; the private sector; religious organisations; traditional and other complementary healers; trade unions and individual initiatives, and the establishment of guidelines for mutual cooperation;
- ♦ The RDP aims to focus on the reconstruction of family and community life by prioritising and responding to the needs of those families with no income, of women and children who have been victims of domestic and other forms of violence, of those affected by substance abuse, of the aged, disabled and criminal offenders.

Within such a perspective, the legislation and policy-making processes have been reinforced in order to protect and promote social welfare rights. The sources of these rights are numerous and some of them have been chosen as key examples. These are presented below.

a) Social welfare rights in the South African Constitution

At the highest level, social welfare rights are protected by the South African Constitution¹⁷. Without detailing specific articles, this protection is well stated in the Preamble where it is stipulated:

"... We therefore, through our freely elected representation, adopt this constitution as the supreme law of the Republic so as to

*Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on **democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights**;*

*Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the **will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law**;*

*Improve the quality of life of all citizens and **free the potential of each person**; and*

¹⁷ For full details, see the Bill of Rights in South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996): Chapter 2.

Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

May God protect our people."

b) The White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997

This is a document developed by the Department of Welfare to explain its policy on social security and social services. The document seeks to respond to the need for sustainable improvements in the well-being of individuals, families and communities.

♠ Concerning the **social security system**, the White Paper distinguishes four main elements:

- **Private savings:** people voluntarily save for unexpected events such as disability, retirement and chronic diseases;
- **Social insurance:** joint contributions by employers and employees to pension or provident funds, or social insurance covering other unexpected events. Government may also contribute to social insurance funds.
- **Social assistance:** non-contributory and means-tested benefits provided by the State to groups such as people living with disabilities, elderly people and unsupported parents and children, who are unable to provide for their own minimum needs. These social assistance benefits are called "social grants" in South Africa.
- **Social relief:** short-term steps to help people in crisis such as those affected by a natural disaster. The White Paper mentions and discusses a range of areas to be focused on and specifies various vulnerable groups to be taken into consideration and/or to be empowered.

♠ To give an example in terms of **children assistance**, the White Paper on Social Welfare is quite explicit. Here the White Paper recognises the fact that the well-being of children depends on the abilities of families to function effectively. It shows that the increasing pressure on families means that they are often unable to fulfil their parenting and social support roles effectively without the active support of the community, the state and the private sector. Pre-school children are seen as particularly vulnerable. The programmes for children and families are based on the respect for their rights. Poor

families should be given first priority in the allocation of resources, the transfer of skills and in socio-economic development. Children are only placed in residential care as a last resort.

c) *The Social Assistance Act, N° 59 of 1992* and the Regulations in terms of the *Social Assistance Act, 1992, N° R418 of 31 March 1998*

These constitute the main legislation governing the giving of social grants. The types of social grants in South Africa are: grant for the aged; war veterans' grant; grant for the disabled; child support grant; foster child grant; care dependency grant; grant in-aid; and social relief of distress.

c) Other legislation includes:

- ***The Special Pensions Act, N° 69 of 1996***: provides for a special pension to be paid to people over 60 who made sacrifices or served the public interest in the struggle for democracy, and the dependants of these people.
- ***The Unemployment Insurance Act, N° 30 of 1966***: provides for social insurance benefits. The provision is linked to employment.
- ***The Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COIDA), N° 130 of 1993***. This Act creates a compensation fund. If an employee has an accident while at work that results in disablement or death, that employee and his/her dependants have a right to the benefits described in the Act.
- ***The Child Care Act, N° 74 of 1983*** is a key piece of legislation dealing with children's rights, including their right to social services.
- The new equality law: the ***Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 2000***, aims to promote equality, and to prevent and prohibit unfair discrimination.

4.3 Legislation and social welfare policies in Rwanda

So far, Rwanda has been suffering from the lack of an independent and coherent national social welfare policy. The challenge is still to develop a unified set of policies, procedures and amalgamated systems. The need for such policy formulation and legislation has become extremely critical with the emergence of multiple and complex social problems resulting from the genocide and especially from the ever-increasing number of vulnerable people. In this regard, some national instruments or laws need to be reviewed and supplemented in order to promote the social welfare of the citizens, and particularly the vulnerable.

Generally, departmental or sectional policies assist variously in intervening in the social welfare domain. If these policies are lacking, specific guidelines are developed for responding to specific instances while in other cases, reference to customary practices prevails when there is no precision in legal documents (e.g. land problems). Fortunately, the leaders and policy-makers consider remedying the situation a priority and are committed to up-dating all the national legal frameworks as soon as possible. Their attitude refers even to the Constitution, and consultations for its revision are almost complete.

However, important efforts have been made in favour of social welfare rights and some references should be given as key examples.

a) The Constitution of June 10th 1991, which states that:

- All citizens are equal before the law, with no discrimination, especially of race, colour, origin, ethnicity, clan, sex, opinion, religion or social position (Art 16);
- The family, the natural base of Rwandan society, is protected by the State. Parents have the right and obligation to raise their children (Art 24).

b) In terms of the **social security system**, Rwanda has, since its attainment of independence in 1962, established the **National Social Security Fund (NSSF)** known as "Caisse Sociale du Rwanda". It is now functioning under the Decree of 22/8/1974 replacing the law of 15/11/1962. The fund manages two branches: the branch of pensions and that of occupational injuries and disease.

All salaried workers are subject to the Rwandan Social Security, be they nationals or foreigners working in Rwanda. In all cases, the employer is under obligation to remit to the NSSF his own and the employee's parts of the contribution. Thus, the employee cannot object to his/her part being deducted from the remuneration. However, voluntary insurance can be applied for if a worker leaves salaried service or is self-employed but the process of registration must be done according to specified conditions.

c) Relating to **social assistance**, the limited means of the country do not allow for helping all disadvantaged people. Only the very vulnerable survivors of the genocide and other destitute children at school (secondary school especially) are materially or financially assisted by the **Fund for Survivors of Genocide (FARG)** and the Ministry charged with Social Affairs (**MINALOC**) respectively. For the rest, occasional and sporadic aid is collected and distributed to the needy. Furthermore, various organisations working in conjunction with MINALOC or other ministries, churches and local NGOs have been initiating different projects/programmes for short, medium or long-term periods in order to promote social development.

Regarding specifically FARG, **law N° 02/98 of 22/01/1998** regulating its functioning has been promulgated. FARG assists the survivors in the areas of education, health and shelter. According to its provisions, it has been improving the living conditions of the beneficiaries through:

- micro-credits for income-generating projects and
- the project "A cow, a family".

d) **Law N° 47/2001 of 18/12/2001** institutes punishment for offences of discrimination and sectarianism. This law reinforces the “principle of equality of all persons before the law, regardless of one's sex, origin, race, colour, religion, age, political affiliation, nationality or ethnicity as envisaged in the Constitution of Rwanda and the international conventions to which Rwanda is a signatory.”

e) **In terms of child protection**, three legal frameworks have been set up:

- **Law N° 27/2001 of 28/04/2001** relating to the rights and protection of the child against violence;

- **Presidential Order N° 31/1 of 26/01/2002** approving and ratifying the optional protocol to the Convention of the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict;
- **Presidential Order N° 32/01 of 26/02/2001** ratifying the optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

It is important also to note the initiation of a draft document on guardianship, adoption and inheritance law and another on street children that are under way in MINALOC. Likewise, the documents in favour of various other vulnerable groups, particularly the handicapped and the aged, are being finalised within the same ministry.

f) Law N° 22/99 of 12/11/1999 supplements Book I of the Civil Code and institutes Part 5 regarding matrimonial regimes, liberalities and succession. This law promotes in general **gender equality** as women are especially given the right legally to play a role in family decisions on sensitive issues regarding which they were previously excluded.

g) The last law to be mentioned because of its importance in promoting social justice, respect for human rights, and reconciliation and which constitutes a prerequisite for real unity of the population is the **law setting up "GACACA JURISDICTIONS"**. This **organic law N° 40/2000 of 26/01/2001** organises prosecutions for offences constituting the crime of genocide or crimes against humanity committed between October 1, 1990 and December 31, 1994. Its main aim is to achieve **reconciliation and justice** in Rwanda, by permanently eradicating the culture of impunity and adopting provisions to ensure prosecutions and trials of perpetrators and accomplices without focusing simply on punishment. It also aims at the **reconstruction of the Rwandan society**.

In short, and referring to the global aim of the Government of National Unity, which is "**to improve the well-being of Rwandan population**", MINALOC, while preparing the National Policy for Social Welfare (NPSW), has adopted the policy guidelines summarised as follows:

♠ **Mission:** To promote good governance and the well-being of the Rwandan population by:

- Setting up decentralised, democratic and decision-making structures;
- Reinforcing the capacities of the population for its permanent involvement in the conception and implementation of its own development; and
- Contributing to the resolution of social problems.

♠ **Fundamental values:**

- Unity;
- Equity;
- Democracy;
- Sustainable development and patriotism.

4.4 Relevance of social welfare policies for the improvement of the conditions of the vulnerable

The management of the aftermath of apartheid in South Africa and the genocide in Rwanda is not an easy task and requires unprecedented determination and wisdom. Indeed, the two abominable events have deeply destabilised the societies in question and led to an extreme misery of the populations who need various forms of intervention at different levels to "dress their wounds" and to prepare them adequately for their future. More particularly, the 1994 genocide in Rwanda destroyed the social fabric of the society, decimated families, and greatly reduced the capacity of communities to meet their own needs.

One of the greatest and lasting legacies of both tragedies remains the instance of various categories of vulnerable people whose number does not seem to decrease, but on the contrary, threatens to increase gradually under the effect of several additional factors including:

- ♦ the high birth rate which challenges the State to provide sufficient means for the protection of the newborn;
- ♦ the glaring poverty in rural areas and deprived urban communities that complicates the situation especially of women, children and the elderly;

- ♦ progressive migration of men in search of jobs to provide some money for the survival of their families while unfortunately leaving these in deplorable conditions without adequate protection;
- ♦ unemployment especially of the young people who do not get the chance to continue their studies, and even graduates who are not easily employed today;
- ♦ the spread of HIV/AIDS;
- ♦ the trauma and stress related to this range of problems;
- ♦ the family disintegration and the weakening of the traditional system of solidarity.

In South Africa and Rwanda, the vulnerable people include those listed below.

Table 7: List of vulnerable groups in South Africa and Rwanda

South Africa	Rwanda
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The rural poor- People living in informal settlements- Homeless persons- Female headed households- women- Abused women (battered, raped, ...)- Disabled- Older persons- Persons with HIV/AIDS- Formerly disadvantaged racial groups- Children of different categories- Unemployed people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Poor people- Children who head households, in foster families, street children and other categories- Women- Rape victims- Female headed households- Traumatized persons- Homeless- HIV/AIDS victims- Disabled- The elderly- Unemployed people

It is important to mention that the list is not exhaustive. In fact, these groups have been highlighted because they are comprised of people most affected physically, emotionally or morally (in the respective countries) and who need immediate assistance. Furthermore, they are, in each case, often emphasised in official reports and constitute so far the major target of the helping organisations. Finally, most of those groups have been highlighted by the participants throughout the research and this is reported in **Chapter 5** (cf. different quotations).

All things considered, the legislation and the definition of appropriate policies in the field of social welfare remain of great importance. With clear guidelines, it becomes indeed easy – at least theoretically – to appreciably mobilise the necessary forces towards improving the living conditions of individuals, families and communities while giving preference to the vulnerable. In the same way it becomes possible to:

- ◆ initiate, plan, implement and evaluate specific social programmes;
- ◆ avoid disorder and duplication in the provision of social services;
- ◆ deal equitably with the socio-economic problems of people without excluding anyone; and
- ◆ know how to control the activities of those engaged in social services provision.

In short, the promotion, defence, respect and effort of the application of social welfare rights in South Africa and Rwanda, especially since the advent of their respective new governments in 1994, have so far helped to solve many problems and to relieve the plight of vulnerable people at a certain level. As the social assistance programmes seem not to meet all the needs of the vulnerable, it is incumbent on the governments and all partners – who are fortunately aware of this – to implement further measures essentially related to developmental approaches and thereby, to improve conditions for the vulnerable.

Conclusion

Hopefully, this chapter will have promoted the discovery of how the South African and Rwandan governments are concerned with the ideals underpinning the social development paradigm (improving people's quality of life, promoting equality and equity, social justice and so forth) as well as with the social work values and principles previously discussed. Furthermore, this chapter will hopefully have prepared the reader for a meditative reading of the following chapter. In the next chapter indeed, an understanding will be given of the orientation of social welfare organisations (an increasing movement towards a developmental approach), the social work professionals' concerns, as well as the preoccupation of higher educational institutions/social work departments (adaptation of curricula to national social policies) for the promotion of social welfare conditions.

Chapter 5 Realities on the ground in South Africa and Rwanda

Introduction

The aims of this chapter are to highlight the main results of the field study in Rwanda and South Africa, and to analyse and interpret these. The interpretation has expressly been integrated with the analysis for a clear and simultaneous understanding of the results.

The chapter is divided into two main sections:

- ♦ An overview of the methodological process and characteristics of participants
- ♦ Systematic presentation of the research findings composed of six complementary sub-points. These findings are presented mainly on the basis of a specific format comprising a general summary, various quotes and comments. Thereafter, some illustrative case studies both from Rwanda and South Africa are supplied to assist in understanding what is really happening on the ground in terms of social welfare programme implementation and the vision of professionals.

Finally, a conclusion to the chapter summarises the key findings, and at the same time, serves as an immediate link between the previous discussion and the last chapter of general conclusions and recommendations.

5.1 Methodological process and characteristics of participants

5.1.1 Methodology

It is important to remind the reader that the pivotal question of the study concerned fundamentally the *"importance of social work training in promoting social development"*. Accordingly, the task of the researcher was to show the relationship between the independent variable "social work training" and the dependent variable "promotion of social development".

However, it was unavoidable that other factors, various **moderator variables**¹⁸, might influence the dependant variable, such as the "working conditions of social workers",

¹⁸ According to Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:28), the **moderator variable** is that factor that is measured, manipulated, or selected by the researcher to discover whether or not it modifies the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

the "attitudes of different role players towards the social work profession" and so forth. These moderator variables have been objectively manipulated in order to enrich the information and still allow an evaluation of the status of social work in Rwanda and South Africa.

As mentioned earlier in Chapter One, a triangulation of specific and qualitative techniques was used for gathering field information. In this way, the use of questionnaires in interviews as well as for Focus Group Discussions (FGD) appeared to be satisfactory for the purpose of the study (cf. guidelines for interview in **Chapter 1**).

In order to proceed to a systematic analysis of the data, the information obtained was coded and classified according to specific categories (see the grid for analysis of interviews and FGD information in **Appendices A and B**). On the whole, four categories have been explicitly retained. These are the categories relating to:

- Crucial social problems both in South Africa and Rwanda;
- Different role players in addressing social problems and strategies for the promotion of social development;
- Acceptance and working conditions of social workers in South Africa and Rwanda;
- Specific role of educational institutions and place of social work education.

The information not falling under these headings served as contextual material for the central categories. It is important to bear in mind that the use of simple or participant observation and also of various kinds of secondary data has effectively supplied the information and an in-depth understanding of causal relationships existing between the variables under study.

5.1.2 Brief description of participants in the study

Depending on the objectives of the study and the choice of participants concerned, the target group was primarily composed of people having a background in social work and practising this profession full-time or part-time. Accordingly, professionals within

social welfare organisations, schools and universities have been interviewed. Students undertaking effective practicals were also included.

The analysis showed that respondents from social welfare organisations with more than five years of experience was slightly higher in South Africa (60%) than in Rwanda (55%). In terms of lecturers, 8 out of 11 in South Africa have more than nine years of experience and are highly qualified (7 out of 11 have a PhD). Among the lecturers interviewed in Rwanda, two permanent and expatriate lecturers with more than five years of experience are the only qualified social workers and have MA degrees. Other qualified lecturers are guests and were not available at the time the research was being conducted.

As stated in Chapter One, student participants in the discussions were all about to finish their studies, and thus assumed to be familiar with the field work: BA programme at UWC; BA and MA programme at US; BA programme at NUR and D6 (secondary school certificate equivalent to grade 12) at ENDP-Karubanda (Butare). Finally, more than 95% of the professionals and student social workers are women, demonstrating that the profession is dominantly feminine.

In order to provide a variety of perspectives, a range of other individuals was asked to collaborate and they are fully presented in Chapter One. Social welfare managers are considered privileged key informants and it must be kept in mind that, in Rwanda, they are mostly men except in some cases of church organisations or NGOs. Furthermore, these managers have in general a background in sociology, psychology or economics, and even law. In contrast, the situation is different in South Africa where qualified women play an important role.

In the context of this study, each of these categories of informants has been specifically labelled. The codes used are listed below:

- ♦ **SWP-SA:** Social Work Professional in South Africa
- ♦ **ASWP-RW:** Assistant Social Work Professional in Rwanda
- ♦ **SWOM-SA:** Social Welfare Organisation Manager in South Africa

- ♦ **SWOM-RW**: Social Welfare Organisation Manager in Rwanda
- ♦ **SWL-SA**: Social Work Lecturer in South Africa
- ♦ **SWL-RW**: Social Work Lecturer in Rwanda
- ♦ **KI-SA**: Key Informant in South Africa
- ♦ **KI-RW**: Key Informant in Rwanda
- ♦ **FGD-SA**: Focus Group Discussion in South Africa
- ♦ **FGD-RW**: Focus Group Discussion in Rwanda

5.2 Research findings

5.2.1 Functioning and foci of social welfare organisations in South Africa and Rwanda

Social welfare organisations in South Africa are essentially private but they are required to report to the government, which prescribes general policies as shown in **Chapter 4**. In addition, they work in conjunction with the SACSSP, which acts as their representative and especially as their watchdog in respect of deontology, and which provides guidance to social work professionals. They receive funds from the government/Department of Welfare in the form of subsidies, and from fundraising, bequests, private organisations, individual benefactors, the national lottery and from other, overseas donors. But their budget could vary according to the quality of projects on the agenda. In the words of an informant:

"It is important to have relevant projects, services and book-keeping well organised to be able to compete for the funds and so to convince sponsors." (SWOM-SA)

Social welfare organisations are manifestly making a major contribution to the reconstruction of society and to the improvement of the living conditions of people, especially the vulnerable, through the various programmes that they so competently run. They mainly concentrate on the problems of historically disadvantaged people, children, women, youth and the elderly. Their personnel is essentially composed of well-skilled social workers, psychologists, clinicians who are increasingly working with a number of community volunteers. The social workers' input is of great

importance and they serve in a range of domains including project management, training programmes, assistance to the beneficiaries of social grants, needs assessments, follow-up activities, counselling, administrative duties and social marketing.

In general, and referring to the new government's policies and particularly the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997), the social welfare organisations are progressively focusing on the developmental perspective. The reason for this is that, as the informants said, with limited means in the face of ever-increasing needs, the best future for people will depend on the involvement of these same people in their own development, instead of relying solely on government assistance. It was specified that material and particularly additional human resources in the psychosocial domain are required for the empowerment of the population.

In Rwanda, the welfare state still predominates, but most of the services are indirectly financed by external sponsors while, as previously stated, churches, several NGOs and progressively more local NGOs continue to play a remarkable role especially for the benefit of children, women, the poor and HIV/AIDS sufferers. As the country entered the development phase in 2000, social welfare organisations are required to change the strategies that were problem-oriented during the emergency period when initiatives were taken without specific and in-depth consultation or following strict national social welfare policy. This lack of formality has sometimes led to the duplication of programmes, a situation which really does not benefit the vulnerable.

As stated by an informant – a high ranking official –,

"Social welfare services have always emphasised a simple distribution of material things, very often under the auspices of various NGOs and not always in an equitable manner. It is time to provide not only aid, but also to make beneficiaries aware of their essential responsibility in fighting social problems instead of remaining in indefinite waiting. They have to be empowered in order to participate effectively in the problem-solving process. Accordingly, we may set up more explicit policies and programmes promoting both the socio-economic rights of the citizens and full involvement of them in their own development."

Within this perspective, social welfare organisations have to contribute substantially, but currently they suffer from a lack of sufficient qualified personnel for switching adequately to the developmental approach strongly recommended by the government. Among the personnel needed are social work professionals whose intervention would cover various aspects including:

- The mental and psychosocial effects of violent death on survivors of war and genocide.
- The increased threat of poverty.
- A lack of trust between different groups in the community.
- The continuous reintegration of large numbers of children into the community.
- The breakdown of many family and social structures.
- The spread of HIV/AIDS and the increasing number of its victims.

In short, social workers are supposed to help to "heal the hearts of the people, to promote unity and to empower these people", conditions that are a *sine qua non* for the people's real participation in sustainable development. However, the task of social workers is not so simple because of the complexity of social problems as shown in the section below.

5.2.2 Crucial social problems in South Africa and Rwanda

a) General summary

"Socio-economic problems in Rwanda are numerous and complex. For some people it is poverty, HIV/AIDS, for others it is ignorance, despair, trauma, or all kinds of problems due to the genocide. In brief, the list is endless. But what is more unfortunate is the fact that most of the people face more than one of those problems and do not know how to cope with them. Another important point is that people who are comfortably off incriminate the disadvantaged as if these latter are at the origin of their deplorable situation. Finally, there are some of those problems we think we can control easily, such as HIV/AIDS or trauma, but in reality, we do not know their virulence and how rampantly they are spreading especially in rural areas... In all cases, children and women are, like in many other countries, the first and most adversely affected." (KI-RW)

A respondent in South Africa, in turn, declared that:

"South Africa is faced with several problems and some, if not all of them, are common to Africa, even to the whole world. The core problems I can cite are poverty, HIV/AIDS, unemployment, housing, violence and crime. But if you analyse, they are somehow tied to each other and poverty remains the root of many of them. In fact, when you look at poverty, it is a problem with intrinsic and interlinked components: an economic, ecological, social and human component. On the whole, the political component may be taken into consideration for managing the four and tackling adequately poverty. For example, you cannot give attention to the housing problem or unemployment and avoid providing people with life skills to empower them, or to take environmental problems into account. All this obliges to have a good planning and to function in a sharing society. Unfortunately, we are more and more living in a materialist-driven and competitive society that does not manifestly integrate all categories of the population." (SWL-SA)

These two opening quotes summarise a range of others and indicate the relative similarity of social problems in Rwanda and in South Africa. More importantly, it emerges from the quotes that social problems are inextricably intertwined and are not only local but are, in general, shared worldwide. Before commenting further, it is opportune to examine the views of the various informants through a generalised representation (**Table 8** below) and additional selected quotations.

It is important to bear in mind that amongst the social problems targeted as priorities by social welfare organisations in South Africa are: poverty, HIV/AIDS, child and women abuse, drug abuse, family disintegration, and unemployment. In Rwanda, social welfare organisations focus on poverty alleviation, family reconstruction, HIV/AIDS, child protection, the upliftment of women, and particularly, problems related to the genocide that appear at various levels. In short, most of the responses from professionals and social welfare organisation managers were essentially given referring, first and foremost, to the foci of social programmes run by the organisations within their respective countries. Accordingly, the selected quotations can be relied upon to provide valid information.

b) Specific views of respondents**Table 8: Crucial social problems as mentioned by the participants in the study (see details in Appendix C)**

Respondents Type of problem	SOUTH AFRICA (N = 38)		RWANDA (N = 47)	
	Total	%	Total	%
Poverty	32	23,18	39	19,02
HIV/AIDS	24	17,39	26	12,68
Crime, violence and deviance*	19	13,76	22	10,73
Unemployment	20	14,49	20	9,75
Cultural depravity	11	7,97	18	8,78
Family disintegration	20	14,49	31	15,12
Ignorance	12	8,69	22	10,73
Consequences of genocide	-		27	13,17

** Deviance encompasses here various kinds of behaviour disturbing to society such as vagrancy, delinquency and different forms of abuse such as the eruption of the paedophilia phenomenon.*

The table points out clearly the seriousness of specific social problems in South Africa and Rwanda. In fact, the respondents were asked to freely indicate crucial social problems faced by the two countries to a severe degree and the situation is that:

* Poverty heads the list of all social problems mentioned by all categories of respondents both in South Africa and Rwanda. Poverty is so prominent that its seriousness is indisputable, and it may be considered as a priority to focus on for addressing the challenge of development in these countries.

* Excepting the problem of genocide peculiar to Rwanda (the consequences of which – trauma, chronic diseases, risks of attacks by refugees and so on – continue to impact on the lives of survivors and even of the whole population), the three social problems that are most cited in both countries are: poverty, HIV/AIDS and family disintegration. Apparently there is no great difference between problems of the same rank in terms of gravity, if the percentages of respondents are considered. The same situation applies to the problems that follow each other in decreasing order in each country, and this observation presupposes a possible linkage between them. It is imperative to fight against these three problems in order of priority, and of course, by focusing on the one, the effects of intervention can be expected to spread to the other. The success of such

intervention will depend on the available resources and the context within each country.

* With regard to culture depravity, the percentage is the lowest and this can hopefully denote the possible persistence of some positive traditional values on which it should be fruitful to rebuild the communities.

* In decreasing order of priority, the common main problems taken from a range of those indicated by respondents are listed as follows:

South Africa	Rwanda
1) Poverty	1) Poverty
2) HIV/AIDS	2) Family disintegration (Consequences of genocide)
3) Unemployment and family disintegration	3) HIV/AIDS
4) Crime, violence and deviance	4) Crime, violence, deviance and ignorance
5) Ignorance	5) Unemployment
6) Cultural depravity	6) Cultural depravity

As each respondent was asked to indicate the problem he/she considered most serious, it appeared that almost all informants indicated more than one problem, very often emphasising the inevitable connection between the problems mentioned. This is illustrated in their statements, and some examples are given below:

♦ *"Poverty is a very tricky problem to which are connected a range of others such as street life of thousands of our children, unemployment, ignorance, diseases especially HIV/AIDS." (SWOM-RW)*

♦ *" We are particularly faced with the problems of HIV, poverty, unemployment but it is difficult for me to separate them because they can easily influence each other. The problem of the increasing family structures breakdown today needs also to be mentioned and it leads very often to a progressive deterioration of the living conditions especially of normally disadvantaged groups like children and youth, women and the aged... Nowadays, we need to look at the redefinition of the family values... ." (SWOM-SA)*

♦ *" South Africa is faced with many problems and I, as social worker and in reference to my experience in the field, I consider that HIV/AIDS, violence, crime, poverty,*

child/teen and especially female abuse are the most crucial problems we may combat energetically. This requires actually ongoing counselling services but also community mobilisation more particularly for behavioural change." (SWP-SA)

♦ *"Social problems are numerous in Rwanda especially in the aftermath of the genocide whose consequences remain very grave (trauma, mistrust among people, social/family perturbations and so forth). Poverty has increased dramatically and HIV/AIDS is expanding, female and child are also becoming increasingly alarming. Furthermore, ignorance should not be underplayed at all because, for instance, in terms of HIV/AIDS, people without exception continue to consider it non-existent while it continues to kill especially active people; I think that, faced with life and death, the choice should be clear for everybody!"* (ASWP-RW)

♦ *"... Look for instance, our township (Kayamandi) is facing so much problems, the biggest being AIDS, poverty, crime, health, housing, and unemployment. These are not the only problems facing the township: family life is being disturbed, children are getting out of control, young boys are abusing drugs while young girls smoke more and more marijuana."* (KI-SA)

♦ *"The case of Rwanda with the holocaust of genocide is unique in the world. In fact, the genocide has caused terrible upheavals and many people are still suffering from trauma, distress and lack of self-esteem. Unfortunately, these psychosocial problems are exacerbated by several others such as destitution, severe poverty especially in rural areas, HIV/AIDS and material deficiencies in various families, more particularly in those headed by children and women ... I am sure that social workers, who have never been given much consideration, should play an important role in addressing such problems and helping people to sort out the situation by making them aware that they are capable of working towards and participating in the resolution of their own problems."* (SWL-RW)

Focus group participants were in complete agreement with the interviewees. Students from UWC and US emphasised HIV/AIDS, poverty, unemployment, violence, child abuse and crime while in Rwanda, the problems of child headedhouseholds and children in general, poverty, AIDS, widowhood and abuse of women, survivors of the genocide and unemployment were more frequently raised both at NUR and at ENDP – Karubanda. Some of the statements from Rwanda are as follows:

♦ *"Problems of Rwandan society are extremely numerous and complex. Among them, I can indicate the problems of orphans, widows, traumatised people, the poor who constitute the majority of the population, and unemployed youth. To deal with all those problems requires making the whole population responsible. And without wishing to boast, we, as future social workers, have a large role to play in helping people to understand and cope with their problems especially by strengthening the reconciliation process and undertaking community programmes."* (FGD-RW)

♦ *"Our population needs dedicated persons who could help at the lower level to cope with the problems of trauma, malnutrition, ignorance, development projects, poverty in general, family dislocation and prevention of HIV/AIDS."* (FGD-RW)

♦ *"The crucial social problems I can mention are AIDS, crime, child abuse, lack of basic needs for poor people (e.g. housing, water, food), economic perturbations and problem of elderly people. In my career, I would prefer to orientate my efforts to fighting AIDS at the level of community awareness and prevention, or to empowering people at the level of social action or social organising."* (FGD-SA)

c) General comment

As the aim here is to depict only the crucial social problems South Africa and Rwanda are faced with, it is not necessary to enlarge. Nevertheless, it is very important to emphasise the fact that those problems are, one way or another, very close and interconnected. Poverty has been presented as the root problem and is an exceedingly complex phenomenon. This is true because, as borne out by the World Bank statement: *"Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not being able to go to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time. Poverty is losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water. Poverty is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom."* (From Internet visited on 15/08/2002: <http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/mission/up1.htm>,)

The ties between the different challenges are so complex that it is quite difficult to address some problems outside the context of others. The case of the HIV/AIDS pandemic that not only causes poverty but is also fuelled by it is revealing. In fact, HIV *"... cannot be addressed outside the context of the poverty that prevails across Africa. This is a challenge both to Africa, and to the international community... it is*

impossible to overcome the AIDS pandemic without far-reaching social and economic change across the continent" (http://www.justiceafrica.org/aids1_2.html visited on 15/08/02). Some of the ways in which poverty contributes to HIV/AIDS are as follows:

- poverty often leads to ignorance about HIV/AIDS;
- with poverty, protection can be costly;
- poverty entails the inability to manage risk and this in turn undermines long-term prospects;
- poverty drives women to unprotected sex;
- poverty increases mother-to-child transmission;
- poverty contributes to migration (dramatic leaving of families by men for far away places looking for job opportunities and succumbing to casual sex) and especially to the drift from the land by numerous young people who consider towns as their future paradise;
- poverty contributes to work in the informal sector because of decreasing employment opportunities in the formal sector and this also constitutes a risk factor for HIV/AIDS.

Finally, the question should be posed:

Even if poverty is apparently the "*oldest and the most resistant virus that brings about a devastating disease in the Third World called underdevelopment*" (Tazoacha, 2001: 1), is it impossible to combat it? Furthermore, are all social problems it causes, or that engender it, impossible to eradicate?

Solutions to major social problems are not so mundane, but on the other hand, social problems can be dramatically improved in the short – or long-term according to the will of people at different levels in society, including those who are directly affected. In this connection, Loseke (1999: 6) states that "*conditions called social problems share the characteristic that we think it is possible they can be changed. They are conditions we think are caused by humans and therefore can be changed by humans.*" Accordingly, it is possible, for example, to combat the culture of poverty prevalent in Rwanda as well as in South Africa where some individuals or groups, especially in rural areas, informal settlements or suburbs, continue to feel marginalised, dependent,

inferior and fatalistic. As a result, they resort to socially undesirable means of survival like crime, prostitution, violence, gangsterism, robbery and begging.

One of the best responses to such a challenging situation is probably a *"...call to action... for the poor and the wealthy alike... a call to change the world so that many more may have enough to eat, adequate shelter, access to education and health, protection from violence, and a voice in what happens in their communities"* (World Bank from <http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/mission/up1.htm>). Such a call will possibly find answers to the questions posed in Chapter One, especially the main one from Dr Mahbub Ul-Haq. Otherwise, if the gap between the rich and the poor widens and inequalities continue to persist, society as a whole can never be expected to attain prosperity. In fact, the middle class or the rich will be working, walking and sleeping on a time bomb, which will dramatically blow up one day and destroy their wealth. It is so obvious that complete success will depend on sincere leadership at all levels of society, and not only locally or nationally; rather, the involvement of all peoples of the world in these endeavours is a major necessity. It remains to be seen if it is really possible to do away with the rhetoric. The challenge is great, but it is important to bear in mind that the fight against social problems must receive precedence and must mobilise different social development agents who, in turn, have to adopt and implement suitable strategies.

5.2.3 Different role players and strategies for the promotion of social development

a) Summary of general views

When asked to specify the role players for the promotion of social development, the participants in the study unanimously pointed out the following agents:

- Government
- NGOs
- Social welfare organisations
- Civil society (churches, Community Based Organisations (CBOs), Human Rights organisations)

- Private sector
- All community developers such as social workers
- Educational institutions
- The communities themselves.

Throughout the responses, it emerged that strong emphasis was put on government, social welfare organisations, universities, civil society and particularly the community. The government has been described as being "more theorist and policy-maker than practical". In this connection, a South African respondent specified that:

"The government is doing more case work than community work while it is proposing the developmental-oriented approach. They tell people what to do and how, but still they are not doing it themselves especially at local level." (SWL-SA)

However, it was shown that the government very often provides subsidies according to available means.

Civil society, especially churches and social welfare organisations, have been considered sound defenders of vulnerable groups and effective users of the grants or any kinds of aid they have to distribute. Above all, these organisations have been considered relatively active, dynamic and enthusiastic about involving the target population, and specifically the disadvantaged, in the process of their own development. It was mentioned that social workers employed in these organisations are effectively and efficiently utilised more so than in government spheres with appreciable outcomes. In Rwanda, a certain attention has also been given to international NGOs, which are taken to be "good partners of the government, but not always good catalysts for social development."

On this point, a respondent declared that:

"After the genocide, a range of NGOs has intervened in Rwanda but they have not been doing what they should really have done. Most of them have only provided some basic things such as oil, maize, blankets, rice and so forth. They have also participated in the construction of settlements but unfortunately, these have not always fitted the needs of the beneficiaries and the worst thing is that they were too expensive. In short,

they have directed the major part of the assistance into the wrong hands (their staff and the rich) and consequently, the target people (vulnerable groups) have not been correctly served. If you look at the situation of our population, you note that nothing has greatly changed for them. Of course, they have eaten but they still need to eat and they do not have possibilities: it is a pity!" (KI-RW)

As Tazaocha (2001: 8) says: *"One should not be deceived that sustainable development in Africa can ever begin from 'the top'. The idea of putting financial resources on top to trickle down to the bottom (grassroots) has failed in Africa. These resources do not trickle down 2 cm deep and then dry up. If stakeholders and donors do not reverse this method and try the trickle up method, that is, giving assistance and resources to local governments and organisations at the grassroots level, assistance to Africa for sustainable development will be a farce."*

The "bottom-up" alternative is hopefully possible in South Africa where the decentralisation policy is taking root and in Rwanda where the beginning of the same seems to be a positive omen for the future. One way or another, it is more and more evident that all projects, be they under the auspices of the government, NGOs or any other organisation, must be people-driven. What still remains is to implement effectively the defined social policies and to embrace firmly appropriate approaches. Even if the process does seem to be drawn out, such a shift is really being experienced in South Africa and has been initiated in Rwanda, and the results are encouraging (See case studies in **Section 5.2.6**).

b) What approaches are suitable for the promotion of social development?

In terms of effective approaches to address social problems, most respondents felt that the three main social work methods (case work, group work and community work) may be used in combination with a strong focus on community work. In fact, they generally argued that, after a long period of suffering in South Africa as well as in Rwanda, people need to revive their sense of life, their hopes, the trust among themselves and their remembered solidarity. For this, the respondents specified that there is no time to lose, and so it is important to arouse as many people as possible, and not just concentrate efforts on some individuals or a few groups. Of course it would be inhuman to reject individual cases, but the best thing, they declared, is to rebuild the self-esteem of these individuals, to reinforce their relationships with relatives and neighbours, and finally, to help them to feel that they belong to the community so that

they will undoubtedly be enabled to participate in the amelioration of their deficiencies through positive and collective action instead of through crime, violence, and emotional distress.

A simple statistical data analysis on this occasion produced the following results.

Table 9: Suitable approaches for social development in South Africa and Rwanda

Respondents Approaches	SOUTH AFRICA N = 38	RWANDA N = 47
<i>Case work / Group work</i>	0 0%	1 2,12%
<i>Community work</i>	6 15,78%	8 17,02%
<i>Group & Community work</i>	3 7,89%	8 17,02%
<i>Both with case work as priority</i>	6 15,78%	6 12,76%
<i>Both with community work as priority</i>	23 60,52%	24 51,06%

It is quite obvious that in each option no group of responses has singled out case work alone (see detailed results in **Appendix D**). Instead, there are respondents who have chosen either community work, or both group and community work. This result lends added support to the value of the general perspective that upholds community work. The priority given to case work, when used with group and community work together, does not alter the finding because the percentage remains low.

The following selected quotes provide the general views of the respondents and greatly help us to understand how very important the principle of **inclusiveness** is, and the significance of encouraging this principle in South Africa and Rwanda.

♦ *"If you want to do a real development, you must involve the community and actually make the community own the project... When the community does not own it, you cannot pretend to move, this is one of the most important thing social workers have to realize."* (SWP-SA)

♦ *"As social workers, we need to do much more preventative work especially in rural areas that have been ignored for a long time... We would like to move away – maybe not completely from case work – and go more into community development." (SWP-SA)*

♦ *"In the field, the focus now is on the empowerment of the community, on community development strategy. Unfortunately, I doubt if this is in the minds of our future professionals. In fact, the students we receive for their practicals seem to be more interested by case work and they take very often community projects as something they need to do in order only to get their degree... We try to be in contact with universities in order to change progressively that perception." (SWP-SA)*

♦ *"Before, we did too much clinical work and mostly rehabilitation, the focus was not enough on prevention... We must now become aware of the needs of people but also of the assets, the capacities of people. We still focus too much on what people do not have and that is not sustainable; we must mobilise the capacities of all people in the communities and coordinate them in organised efforts and thus they can take responsibility for themselves in their own communities." (SWL-SA)*

♦ *"Community work will be important as an awareness and preventative method, and case work for therapy with victims, patients and family." (FGD-SA)*

♦ *"Community work is the most preferred because each individual is part of the community and should be co-responsible." (FGD-SA)*

♦ *"Working on a macro-level, I think is better to deal with a large number of people in order for programmes to be effective. Influence or change should be targeted to a large number." (FGD-SA)*

♦ *"The three methods are very useful because as you know, in Rwanda, case work is needed in order to help people privately (rape, HIV victims, traumatised), but progressively, their situation should be followed in specific groups. However, it is more suitable to think in a developmental perspective over the long term in order to help more people and to make communities more responsible." (FGD-RW)*

♦ *"During our practicals, I have noticed that people need social workers who are considered dedicated persons and determined to listen to them. Truly, I have come to love the profession more and I told myself: 'If each Rwandan family could have a social worker, all social problems would be solved.' Unfortunately, this type of case*

work requires the necessary resources and I think community development is mostly preferable because less costly, and clinical work should continue for specific cases meticulously chosen." (FGD-RW)

♦ *"In my view, participatory activities with a major focus on vulnerable groups are more suitable. It is imperative in the Rwandan context today to concentrate our efforts on the community because I think, through community action, some interest groups or individual cases could emerge and, according to the seriousness of their situation, they should be helped in particular but always in the process of their community reintegration." (KI-RW)*

♦ *"We have already entered the development phase and the aim of the national policy is the promotion of the general well-being of our population. Accordingly, community development is taken as the privileged strategy. In this way, the population, without any exception – but with particular consideration of vulnerable groups at a certain level – may be given the full right to prepare and monitor their development projects. In this process, rural areas may have priority." (SWOM-RW)*

♦ *"... Of course it is not good to abandon unfortunate cases but very often they cause a waste of time. If possible, they may be enabled to join a collective action. In fact, when you help people in groups or at community level, you gain time and you efficiently serve many more people. For the rapid development of our country, we may promote group work and community development." (ASWP-RW)*

c) General comment

These results allow us to say that community work/community development is favoured in Rwanda and South Africa. As clearly shown in **Chapter 1** and **Chapter 3**, this approach is appropriate to the developmental orientation cherished by the governments of the two countries, particularly the South African government, which has been recommending its direct and full implementation. As also demonstrated in the previous chapters, social problems cannot be addressed without the population's initiative and consent. Without these, development is manipulative and often destructive. Accordingly, the transformation, the change will be possible by approaching people, listening to them and trying to mobilise all citizens, and especially vulnerable groups, towards creating a caring society. As stated by Black Sash (1998: 7):

"It is vital that everybody understands that change is necessary and that it can be difficult, particularly if it is resisted. No structure can make change work, only people can."

People-centred development is more and more becoming a major concern worldwide. To effect this, Kofi Annan, in his address to ECOSOC (UN Economic and Social Council) on 1/07/2002 recommended: *"ECOSOC must give life to the guiding motto of the United Nations in the twenty-first century: putting people at the centre of everything we do."*

The social welfare organisations, and more particularly the social work professionals they employ, are at the forefront of the practice of community work, and the outcomes of their activities are encouraging (see illustrative **case studies**). What can be asked of them is to continue forging ahead.

Throughout the research, the terms "community work" and "community development" seemed to be used interchangeably by respondents. This does not constitute a problem. However, there must be some differentiation – but not separation – because these processes absolutely complement each other. In fact, **community development** may be considered as *"the process of establishing, or re-establishing structures of human community within which new ways of relating, organising social life and meeting human need become possible"* (Ife, 1999: 2). In this context, **community work** will be the practice of professional helpers such as social workers, paraprofessionals or other categories of helpers *"who seek to facilitate that process of community development"* (Ife, 1999: 2). Briefly, community work as the suggested method to be strengthened in South Africa and used in Rwanda must never be exclusive or be restricted to a specific domain. Instead, it should incorporate all the dimensions of social, cultural, economic, political, environmental and personal/spiritual development, in fact a situation that is very well supported by the information gathered during the field research.

Community work practice will undoubtedly help to achieve appreciable results. The social work professionals are among its defenders and they are willing to make efforts in promoting it. However, they are more likely to succeed if their working conditions are improved.

5.2.4 Acceptance and working conditions of social workers

a) Summary of general views

One of the central questions posed during the field research concerned the feelings and attitudes of respondents regarding the profession of social work and the way in which social workers are perceived. Ultimately this avenue leads to questions about how they actually practise their profession, how they process success and failure in reality, and what obstacles, barriers and resistance they are confronted with. Overall, the results of the research show that social work professionals in Rwanda and South Africa enjoy their profession. However – and this is extremely discouraging – the majority work under very hard conditions and are in general relegated to an inferior level, as shown in the table below.

Table 10: Attitudes towards social workers and their working conditions (For more details, see Appendix E)

Respondents	SOUTH AFRICA (N = 38)						RWANDA (N = 47)					
Reactions	YES		NO		NSA		YES		NO		NSA	
<i>Social workers:</i>												
<i>1. Love their profession</i>	33	86,84%	0	0%	5	13,15%	37	78,72%	0	0%	10	21,27%
<i>2. Are well perceived by clients</i>	28	73,68%	0	0%	10	26,31%	31	65,95%	1	2,12%	15	31,91%
<i>3. Work in good conditions</i>	1	2,63%	27	71,05%	10	26,31%	0	0%	38	80,85%	9	19,14%
<i>4. Are well considered in general</i>	4	10,52%	23	60,52%	11	28,94%	9	19,14%	24	51,06%	14	29,78%

Referring to these results, the percentages of "No Specific Answer (NSA)" cannot be disregarded especially if one considers that the respondents were mostly professionals who would probably have provided favourable information. Indeed, even if respondents throughout manifest how much social workers love their profession and how they work in difficult conditions, the percentages of NSA for items 2 and 4, both

in South Africa and Rwanda, are challenging and beg the question if those respondents really know what status is given to social workers. One could argue that the answer is not so evident! Such a possible answer is more stressed through detailed figures where KI-SA (43% for item 2 and 43% for item 4) and KI-RW (53,33% for item 2 and 33% for item 4) were not precise about attitudes expressed towards social workers. The same imprecision is apparent on the part of the SWOM, especially in Rwanda. In short, it emerges from the results that social workers are known as people who are strongly devoted to their profession and practise it under great difficulty. However, recognition of them by social service beneficiaries and the lack of consideration given them in general varies. Definitely, one would not be too far wrong in saying that social workers are more appreciated by their clients because the clients are the most aware of the relevance of their helpers' services. This appreciation from mainly clients reflects the prevalence of the remedial /clinical approach, considered as outmoded, and hence is an important factor in the development of the bad public image of social workers. Hokenstad and Midgley (1998: 20) are very explicit on this point when they say:

"Social workers are frequently associated with outmoded welfare practices and are negatively perceived to be supporting a population of dependant clients who make little if any contribution to society. Until the profession is able to demonstrate that it can contribute to development, this negative public image is likely to persist."

What must be borne in mind is that, despite their devotion, social workers are faced with complex problems throughout the practice of their profession, and solutions must come from different sides, but mainly from their own determination to defend themselves in their career.

This situation in which social workers find themselves has also been a great concern of students in group discussions. Most seemed to be confused about the management of their future in view of the opinions of all those who disparage the social work profession. Many have expressed their fears, and pointed out various barriers to their profession's real recognition. But then again, they have manifested a firm determination to all do their best and to enhance the profession's reputation.

b) Problems social work professionals are faced with on the ground

During interviews and discussions, the respondents and especially social work professionals and social work students, have indicated a number of problems they encounter in the practice of their profession. They emphasised mainly the legacies of the past, unemployment of new graduates and a low level of relevant assistance by local authorities.

♠ Legacies of the past and traditional thinking:

♦ *"People do still think that social workers as well as other professionals involved in the development process will serve them and do all things on their behalf; they remain dependants and do not realise that they are themselves change agents."* (SWP-SA)

♦ *"People do not sometimes trust you because of different considerations especially due to the legacies of the past or simply because of your sociocultural status (language spoken, young woman, race and so forth) and this inhibits somehow our activities."* (SWP-SA)

♦ *"People are so different. For instance some or the majority of those who are living in shacks or in slum conditions in general are very obstinate and do not have hope in the future. They say that they have always been marginalised, there is much to do in order to change their way of life and what is painful is that they think the government is the only one responsible for the resolution of their problems."* (SWP-SA)

♦ *"A lot of workers on the farms have been depending on liquor and they have never got a chance to become self-reliant or to equip their children with all what they needed. Domestic problems are often glaring. Social workers are well helping us here at school and we try together to give children a vision that they can have a good future and especially to teach them to appreciate the 'NOW'. It is not so simple but we hope we will progressively succeed."* (KI-SA)

♦ *"People still think that a social worker is a charitable person and provider of all things (clothes, food and so forth). And very often, they send us various categories of vulnerable telling them that they can receive something from us. This culture has been strengthened during the emergency period after the genocide and I think people do not really understand our primary task of 'helping people to help themselves'."* (ASWP-RW)

From these quotations, it appears that throughout the fulfilment of their obligations, social workers are confronted by the presence of passivity and fatalism on the part of service users, who consider themselves as eternally excluded, or believe what is said about them being "inferior and worthless". At the same time, social workers are frustrated by the popular misconception regarding their status, and by the fact that people still limit the social workers' role to the accomplishment of charitable activities only. Thus, social workers have to constantly struggle to overcome such attitudes in order to contribute appreciably to a behavioural change in the disadvantaged as well as in the privileged, who also have to influence the disadvantaged in their progressive integration into the social development process.

This mission is not so easy as the barriers remain numerous. To give another example, the respondents revealed that the difficulty for new graduates in finding jobs and the low rate of social workers' salaries are no less worrying, as is immediately shown through some quotations.

♠ **Jobs and salary**

♦ *"We are wondering if we will easily get jobs and if yes, the low salary allocated to social workers is not encouraging, compared to their duties in the community. Maybe some of us will try their luck abroad!" (FGD-SA)*

♦ *"The social worker is not given consideration. A lot of people think that what she is expected to do can be done by anyone else. So her role is usurped by other people and the chances for her to find a job today are very low." (SWOM-RW)*

♦ *"Social workers have been working according to the will of their employers. For this, they are given a lot of tasks but often not well specified. They are considered as some who may only distribute aid or receive the needy. Otherwise, they remain on stand-by for fulfilling unexpected tasks. Sometimes our colleagues, especially nurses, receive a technical bonus but this has never been done for us, while we are very exploited here in the hospital." (ASWP-RW)*

♦ *"Social workers are not appreciated, they are not paid a decent salary compared to other professions... ." (SWL-SA)*

♦ *"Social workers are generally ignored in many services in Rwanda. Sociologists are the only ones known and welcomed. Unfortunately, there are plenty of social work activities conducted incompetently and so clients are not helped as they should be."* (FGD-RW)

There is no doubt that a rise in social workers' salary and the allocation of jobs to new graduates will probably help to channel their energy and skills into the multiple activities of social transformation. Their input is sorely needed – especially at local level – in South Africa and Rwanda.

As mentioned by the informants, success at this level will greatly depend on the support of local authorities. Unfortunately, the involvement of these officials is low at present, as shown below.

♦ ***Low relevant involvement of authorities especially at local level***

Even when it appears that the developmental perspective with a people-centred approach is adopted as a priority in South Africa and Rwanda, there are still barriers to the full and adequate implementation of the policies envisaged. The social planning model (see **Appendices G and H**) seems always to prevail and the expected outcomes of "capacity-building" and "self-help" by the beneficiaries cannot logically be obtained with this model.

At the local level, where the authorities are closer to the people, matters do not always evolve quickly and positively. In fact, the local authorities are not well prepared and equipped to be catalysts and co-coordinators of social development. At the very least, they do not have sufficient skills for correctly managing the population. In this connection, some respondents have declared:

♦ *"Local authorities are doing many things, for instance, in the housing domain. However, there is still a lot to perfect (e.g. how to avoid corruption and favouritism?). Social workers have to be advocates, to be percipient and to work together with local authorities for the good of all the people."* (SWP-SA)

♦ *"Local authorities have to respect the principles of transparency and accountability. But people do not understand why our council is not organising meetings and do not*

want to talk to us who have delegated them. Definitely, I am asking myself: 'are they appropriate? Do they know their role? Do they follow their own interests? Are they only preoccupied by politics?'" (KI-SA)

These critics' views are in the same vein as those told to Bekker and Leildé (2001: 12) during their research, when some interviewees stated:

"The local government treat us like cows. I appeal to the local government to think about us. We want more rights, we must work together in co-operation but the local government is unfaithful to us" (Avila Park). 'When you go to the municipality with a problem, they treat you like a dog treats a cat. They are always fighting' and 'when you lay some issues on the table for the Council, the moment you turn your back, your suggestions are thrown in the rubbish bin' (Vredendal North)." Such limited involvement of local authorities is recognised by Terblanche (2001: 4) – an official at the Department of Social Services, Cape Town – who suggests: "Local authorities are currently playing a limited role in the rendering of social welfare services. The approach from government is however that services should be delivered as close as possible to the people. We believe that local authorities can play an important role in the provisioning of child care services and possible other service areas to be negotiated."

In Rwanda, a respondent stated that:

♦ *"Most of the leaders at local level are working according to their usual procedures. The top-down system has practically not changed and the local government team does not yet admit that it works as if it was a "college". There is an urgent need for them to be adequately provided with material resources and more importantly with basic skills helping them to become real promoters of social development. Social workers, jurists, sociologists and psychologists are sorely needed for this task, especially at this time when the "Gacaca Courts" are starting their activities and when people need to be united once and for all."* (KI-RW)

On the other hand, an assistant social worker said:

♦ *"Decentralisation as defined by the law is very fine. But it is still in theory because on the ground things remain as they were before. The local authorities still decide what to do and how. This very often inhibits our activities because it is quite difficult to mobilise the population and to organise anything without their [local authorities] support."* (ASWP-RW)

These problems are undoubtedly due to the new system of governance and things will probably progress positively as the leaders at the controls become aware of the situation. For example, when visiting Gitarama Province on 21 June 2002, the President of Rwanda disparaged such attitudes and recommended the real involvement of the leaders at different levels (government, private sector and civil organisations) in helping the population to participate fully in its development. He invited all "influential people" in various domains to play an innovative role in the promotion of the general well-being of Rwandans.

c) Concluding comment

These are the main points that emerged from the research information and show the difficulties social workers encounter in the practice of their profession. However, there were several other points mentioned such as the undervaluing of social work as a "feminine profession" (in Rwanda, social work has been always considered as a profession reserved for women because they are supposed to learn how to manage the family or to coax a husband and also because they are naturally more affective, are nurturers, and are more interested in helping all kinds of vulnerable people); the rejection of its uniqueness because it is said to borrow its theories and methods from other disciplines, especially sociology and psychology; and the ever changing list or nature of social problems that social workers have to deal with.

It could be said that all these considerations relating to the relegation of the profession to an inferior level (especially as a feminine profession) might have been reinforced over time by men who did not find much interest in the profession compared to other "noble professions" that provide an adequate income or great honour (e.g. politics, medicine, aviation, architecture and so forth). In fact, the gender imbalance that has been growing historically, scientifically, socially and politically may possibly be the root of all challenges previously described. However, Davis (1999: 2) says that there is a role for men in social work, and referring to Westerlund and Carden, he asserts that:

"Men are highly welcome in the profession, and they add a great deal to the depth and effectiveness of the practice of social work... the gender imbalance might be worrisome for some clients because they deserved to work with a professional they felt comfortable with, and some may want men."

Finally, it is important to note that social workers' problems are common and have universal causes and that the solutions may really be found and shared commonly. This is well shown by Hokenstad and Midgley (1998: 4):

"Although social work clearly has an important role to play in addressing global challenges, it has major obstacles to overcome to become a more effective player. Lack of status and resources affects social work in most countries and limits the profession's capacity to respond to pressing human needs. Throughout the world social workers are involved in the struggle for social justice, but they often act in the face of political oppression and promote human rights at considerable personal risk. Also, government policies and services delivery structures often limit rather than enhance social work roles. All these factors impede the profession's ability to respond effectively to pervasive problems locally, nationally, and certainly internationally (Hokenstad, Khinduka & Midgley, 1992)."

Despite all difficulties and limitations, which indeed exist also for other professionals, social workers can be gratified with their creativity and innovation in responding to complex social problems. Furthermore, they should know, as positively stated by these same authors, that social work remains a creator of its own destiny, and its status is partly determined by the level of education provided for its professionals.

5.2.5 The role of educational institutions in promoting social development

In social work, when working with individuals, families and communities, it is very important to pass through the process of two simple phases of *"building a relationship and facilitating positive action"* (Brammer & MacDonald, 1999: 4). This process entails scrutinising the clients' personality and behaviour in order to adequately shape them, and to engage progressively their self-help so that they might attain eventual self-sufficiency. It is however no secret that *"... it is difficult to understand the human personality, human behaviour and people's inner motivation. It is not only difficult to understand but sometimes hard to handle too. Thus to be professional you need to have proper education."* (Hough, 2000: 206)

This is a good opportunity to review what educational institutions in South Africa and Rwanda are doing to train social workers to cope with social problems, and to promote social development in general. Without quoting the respondents systematically, the summary of their different points of view will help to enhance the credibility of social work education in each country, and the mechanisms used to reinforce this credibility.

5.2.5.1 The case of South Africa

a) General aspects

Information obtained from educational institutions during the research showed that social work has been taught for a long time in South Africa (70 years at the University of Stellenbosch and more than 40 years at the University of the Western Cape). Both these universities offer degrees at under- and post-graduate levels. After the completion of a four-year programme, students receive a BA degree allowing them to enrol for a MA (Thesis) and later for a PhD programme. Sometimes, an Honours degree is required for admission to the MA programme. Huguenot College, which established in 1951, offers, in addition to BA, MA and PhD degrees, a diploma in Community Development, which allows the holders to register with the SACSSP as Assistant Social Workers.

Except for some internal arrangements or when a certain focus on a particular point is required within one of the above universities, it is obvious that both institutions try as far as possible to marry theory and practice in education. Beyond the general knowledge of and theories in social work, direct social work practice (case work, group and community work) and indirect social work practice (social work supervision, social work research, social work management and social work administration) are emphasised.

After a relatively long period, during which the Western model was emphasised, adaptation to the situation in developing countries, and more particularly to South African realities, has been effected. Accordingly, the community work approach was established in the early 1980s with the immediate concern of combating rampant poverty, especially in black communities. This introduction was not easy considering political ideologies that were categorically opposed to the so-called "propaganda" of social workers taken at the time as subversive. The Department of Social Work at UWC was among those at the forefront that stated in the following terms: "*The Social Work Department at UWC prides itself as being one of the departments which have stood for the basic human rights of ordinary poor South Africans during the protracted conflict between the liberation movements and the apartheid government.*" (Department of Social work at UWC, 2002)

The systematic and official transformation of the education and training of social workers in South Africa started in 1994, in respect of the developmental perspective adopted by the democratic government. As stipulated in the report for presentation to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on social development, Booyens and Tshiwula on behalf of the Joint Universities Committee for Social Work (2001: 1-2) state:

"Most departments of social work have taken significant steps to align their curricula with and to meet the requirements of changes at the macro policy level in South Africa –amongst others, the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997), the Social Welfare Action Plan (1998), the Financing Policy for Developmental Social Welfare Services (1999), the South African Qualifications Act (1995) and the Higher Education Act (1997) - and to root their programmes within the paradigm of social development." This report states also that: *"The integrated approach that analyses the relationship between the micro and macro dimensions of human behaviour and of service delivery is emphasised, as educators are mindful that, in the adoption of the social development paradigm individuals should not fall between the cracks. All departments aim to prepare learners for beginning generic practice within the South African context."*

The organisation of practical work depends on the means available (particularly transport), and the time spent in the field varies too, but in most instances it remains substantial. For example, at the University of Stellenbosch, the number of hours spent in practice is 35, 50, 148, and 616 respectively at the first, second, third and fourth year levels of training.

b) What are the feelings of respondents?

In general, lecturers are quite happy with the shift to the developmental approach and the changes that are taking place in the curricula. They declare that the theory meaningfully fits the practice and they are sure graduates will be serving society competently. Some of their views are as follows:

♦ *"In South Africa as well as in other African countries, we are still facing problems of underdevelopment, and poverty remains a very great challenge. We feel we need more than ever to train our students in such a way they can make an impact out there in the*

community. In such a way, we cannot work so much on an individual basis, instead we must move more to the community-oriented approach."

♦ "I consider that our programmes are fine. Of course we still need to review some points but so far, our students receive enough theory in class and when they go in their practicals, they perform very well. The theoretical and practical curricula complement each other and they emphasise the developmental approach in the South African context."

♦ "The social workers we train have to make change in their respective communities and in the society in general, I am sure they can. What is very important for me as lecturer is to provide them with enough knowledge and skills. But I think it is also imperative to focus on **fundamental principles** such as **respect for human dignity, involvement and participation of the people, self-help** and so forth. This must be part of the social workers' personality and manifested through the love for people they care for."

Students, for their part, are quite satisfied with their programmes and some opinions expressed in their responses are:

♦ "The knowledge and skills from university gave me the power to help clients to empower themselves and to solve their problems... I am realising more and more that undergraduate students must get as much skills and knowledge as possible, to give them the power to do their best especially in development and community work in the future."

♦ "Community work and group work are the main methods I have been using in my practicals and the theory acquired about these methods helped me a lot."

♦ "We are working in a fast changing society. University knowledge is paramount; however the problems social workers are facing cannot be covered in a four-year academic programme. But it is important to emphasise much more comprehensive knowledge about community development and management."

♦ "The basic skills are adequately addressed, but we are living in a constantly changing world. It could be better to provide more knowledge and skills concerning cross-cultural social work."

♦ "Knowledge and skills are comprehensive and can be applied in any context and situation. But for more [i.e. increased/improved] performances, social workers need to

acquire enough skills in social marketing, civil law and to deepen the domain of human rights. It is also important to think how to specialise in certain domains."

The information from social welfare organisations is uniformly positive. The respondents have in fact shown their appreciation of what the social work departments do, especially in terms of the partnership that has been growing through the qualitative work their students accomplish during the practical education. Furthermore, the lecturers are involved in social welfare services in one way or another (members of local management committees, defenders of the social work profession at different, high levels – even internationally, consultation services and research).

Except for the fact that there is still a lot to do to promote more fruitful interactions with the social work departments, the SWP and SWOM in South Africa are deeply confident of the role of the tertiary institutions in general as the best providers of stimulating services to the community. Some experiences of partnership between social welfare organisations and the University of Stellenbosch are revealing in terms of palpable outcomes or inspiring new ways of addressing and preventing social problems in the future. In this connection, the case study on the Matie Community Service (MCS) is deeply inspiring.

The general observation of the SWOM and social work professionals is that the educational model of agency-university collaboration is generally excellent. However, it emerged from their attitudes that sometimes, if not often, academics pursue their own higher academic interests more actively and their commitment to the practical field is not permanent. Particularly, in the instance of their research, they need the cooperation of professionals for testing their theories, and for gathering information in order to write books or articles. Yet, after the award of their doctorates or the enhancement of their CVs, they leave without benefiting the community with the results of their research. The same applies to students who are placed in different social welfare agencies for their practicals. At the end of the year, they are awarded their degrees and they disappear; the following year, a new intake is sent and so on. This does not optimally benefit the community, which needs permanent relationships and a re-enforcing follow-up.

c) Concluding comment

"... Our profession has more knowledge and skills relevant to social development than any other; we have years of pertinent experience in working with people and environments; we have the largest organised workforce of all the social service professions – 10 000 registered social workers; we have established agency structures that can be adapted towards developmental enterprises; we have new opportunities for funding – the programme structures that cry out for exploitation; and we have a government policy that for the first time in many years is in harmony with our deepest professional beliefs of social justice and equity." (McKendrick, 2001: 105)

Referring to this quotation, it could be said that an appreciable place is reserved for social work education and practice in South Africa. However, the fact that there is one social worker to 40 000 people is "woefully inadequate for meaningful development". Accordingly, there is a great need for more helpers to meet the social welfare and developmental needs of the masses. Assistant social workers and para-professional workers (volunteers) could be encouraged more and in fact, these are the people who can work most closely with their services users.

Assistant or auxiliary social workers are very much needed, considering the extent of social problems. It is advisable that they remain and work in their respective communities. Accordingly, the system of a two-year programme in community development at Huguenot College should be expanded to other tertiary educational institutions. In this regard, the selection of candidates should be standardised and consist of approving any person who has completed his/her secondary schooling in any field, as there is no social work programme at school level. Furthermore, the criterion of being interested in the social welfare field, and the recommendation of the communities concerned – which could contribute to training fees (in the absence of government subsidies) – will be necessary. The top priority should be given to people already involved in social service programmes as volunteers, or to employees in the public or private sector, as this will facilitate their practicals.

As social workers today have to work in multidisciplinary teams for maximum success, it would improve matters if they were to give basic information about their profession to their counterparts. The task could be simplified if this were done within

educational institutions by the social work departments. Beyond the usual collaboration with the departments of sociology, education and others allied to social work – as observed during the research – the social work departments should set up various channels through which the partnership with all other departments could be promoted. This would undoubtedly assist in raising awareness among all future leaders or professionals in different spheres of the social problems that society is faced with.

Finally, the progressive adjustment of the curricula could be linked to a frequent exchange of views about the outcomes. For example, it is recognised that some students from the social work departments at the institutions targeted in this study meet frequently at different social welfare agencies in the course of their practicals, and talk about their studies. But further, would it not be possible to organise regular and formal workshops in the region (at least for the fourth year students) where they will have the opportunity to share their experiences and to think about their future in dialogue with their lecturers?

5.2.5.2 The case of Rwanda

a) Brief overview of the state of social work education in the secondary school

Rwanda has been running a social work programme, ratified by a degree, for the office of general assistant social worker. The programme so far is essentially followed by females whose role to start with was to help people (particularly women) to adapt to the new ways of life, and to act as "rural animateurs" (facilitators) for the promotion of community development.

However, this interesting vision did not particularly appeal to men because they considered the secondary social work schools as better suited to the preparation of intellectual and competent wives. Accordingly, the rural region has not been adequately served by social workers as most of them were soon married to people living in town. With the adjustments that have been taking place over time (see **Chapter 3** on the historical development of social work in Rwanda), opportunities for jobs have increased significantly in urban areas, and thus social workers have been seeking occupation mostly there.

The programme is divided at present into two steps. The duration of the first is three years and concerns a general and common training for all students who attend secondary school. The second step is predominantly professional and it also lasts for three years. The curriculum emphasises case and group work; community development; introduction to sociology; social inspirational techniques; social communication techniques; survey techniques; introduction to general psychology; social psychology; and introduction to management skills and practice.

b) Social work education at the NUR

The idea for introducing a social work programme at the NUR emerged in 1997 (34 years after the creation of the NUR) when the reform of all the programmes offered by the University was initiated. Social work education was begun in the academic year 1997-1998, with the firm determination to train knowledgeable and highly skilled graduates who would be expected to participate efficiently in the resolution of a range of social problems faced by Rwanda. During this research, the Vice-Rector charged with Academic Affairs at the NUR specified on 25 June 2002:

"Rwanda is faced with numerous social problems that require responses of quality. Accordingly, the NUR has to prepare social work professionals of high standard in order to address those problems. The social work students will have to master the participatory methodologies and to review the system of working with the population which must be at the centre of its development. In fact, we may respond efficiently and optimally to the needs of the national community and this requires to rely on the capacities of all citizens more than on material means which are insufficient in Rwanda. These citizens have thus to be satisfactorily empowered."

Referring to such a vision, the experimental curriculum of social work at the NUR intends to respond to local/national needs and at the same time to be scientifically strong. The programme is to run for four years and will be ratified by a BA degree. The first year is general and social work students attend courses from the Faculty of Economics, Social Sciences and Management (SESG). The content emphasises the courses on Ethics and Rwandan culture; research methods; introduction to philosophy; generalities in mathematics and descriptive statistics; political economics; contemporary history of Africa and Rwanda; generalities in sociology; introduction to

law; initiation in computer science; social and cultural anthropology; generalities in psychology; and general accountancy.

Apart from some sociology-oriented courses at the other three levels, the foci of the professional content are as follows:

- Childhood problems in Rwanda
- Theory and practice of social work
- Sociology of Health and HIV/AIDS problems in Rwanda
- Advocacy for children and women's rights
- Rehabilitation of vulnerable groups
- Social work practice/social work practice research
- Practicals and a Memoir.

So far, the practical training totals only 285 hours for the four-year programme.

c) Image of Assistant Social Workers vs. Social Workers

Almost all respondents have welcomed the introduction of social work training at the NUR. They have great hopes of seeing the social work profession really taking root in Rwanda. Above all, they expect that the future graduates of the NUR will lend their valuable efforts to the rehabilitation, the reconstruction and the sustainable development of Rwanda. They expressed the hope that social work professionals will particularly participate in the establishment of social welfare policies, as well as contribute to the conception and management of social programmes/projects while advocating for the multitude of vulnerable people whose number has been increasing.

However, the respondents were concerned that, after the completion of their studies, these graduates will probably be sought out for high administrative posts and will not be readily available to help the people directly. This is why it was proposed that the secondary social work schools, whose role remains very important, be maintained. In fact, these schools prepare auxiliary social workers who competently intervene at a lower level and are free of a 'superiority complex'. Furthermore, it could be a very

good opportunity for these auxiliaries to work under the supervision of "sophisticated university-trained social workers" and in so doing, the input of the former would be appreciably enhanced. Some of the respondents describe the situation clearly as follows:

♦ *"The Rwandan society needs more than ever social workers whose role will be to help people to be reconciled first with themselves, to help the community to become self-reliant and especially to recover and to revive the trust lost over time with incessant upheavals. This requires the involvement of dedicated persons who could take their time in listening to people and the community and I think social workers have suitable qualities for fulfilling such a task."* (KI-RW)

♦ *"In remote communities, people who attended school in various areas and are supposed to help or illuminate villagers/peasants are not there; they have migrated to towns or different centres. However, peasants need help in various ways, they need workers who have a vocation to approach them and who would act as real developers. As headmistress of a school that has been training assistant social workers for a long time, I realise that social work is a precious profession, which is somehow a vocation. Social workers teach people how to work, to develop themselves, how to change from a system to another one... Definitely, Rwanda needs such professionals for the promotion of our villagers."* (SWOM-RW)

♦ *"The assistant social workers have to militate for social change and thus they may know the realities on the ground in order to help the service users to correct what is wrong. They have always to perfect their skills. Accordingly, the highly skilled and knowledgeable professionals are needed for their supervision and regular training. The latter must however avoid being mere theorists, they must conduct researches whose results will help them to prepare relevant programmes for social development."* (ASWP-RW)

♦ *"Assistant social workers are very important because they can easily adapt themselves to the population at a lower level. In contrast, social work professionals may consider themselves as highly qualified people and this complex does not facilitate their adaptation. However, they have to work together, the former as technicians and the latter acting as planners, trainers, evaluators and researchers."* (ASWP-RW)

♦ *"At the beginning, we were asking ourselves what kinds of knowledge and skills we will gain from social work and we were discouraged by our colleagues – sociologists – who denigrate the profession. But as we were moving from one level to another – and especially through our practicals – we understood the importance of social work. Accordingly, we are determined to make a difference by helping Rwandans to sort out their complex problems, and I am sure our realisations will be helpful for sociologists. What I notice – and remains to be done – is to marry correctly the theory and practice and so to increase the weight of practicals." FGD-RW)*

♦ *"At school, we are not taught how to make the bed or to prepare good food for the family, as it is commonly said; this can be done by anybody. Being an assistant social worker entails having enough knowledge and skills, and we learn a lot of things, sometimes very difficult. Social work is a very demanding but interesting profession and people do not know this. How happy we are to have been chosen for such an orientation!" (FGD-RW)*

♦ *"During the supervision process, I was very glad to see how well social welfare organisations were receiving our students. Their spirit of organisation and management of social problems impressed the staff. Unfortunately, the field supervisors were not qualified social workers adequate to their role and this impacted greatly on the students' practicals. But I am confident that things will change progressively and positively when these social work students will have started to serve society and consequently to supervise their young sisters and brothers." (SWL-RW)*

d) Concluding comment

Social work is highly valued by the respondents and it is expected that the role it has been playing in Rwanda will improve with the contribution of the graduates of the NUR. It emerges from the respondents' considerations that the activities of social work professionals must be field-based because they have to work in close collaboration with the service users. In this connection, their support of the maintenance of secondary social schools is understandable, as the assistant social workers these educational institutions prepare are trained to have basic knowledge and fundamental skills, allowing them to work with the population without succumbing to unreasonable feelings of either inferiority or superiority. On the other hand, university graduates are needed for the senior posts related to the profession such as administration and

management of social programmes, planning, research, programme evaluation and supervision.

Finally, it appears that no individual can provide what he/she does not himself/herself have. Accordingly, assistant social workers, as well as social workers, must always broaden their horizons. One of the greatest tasks the latter will be required to fulfil is to train the former according to the needs of the population and the pressure of social change. The Rwandan society is anticipating a great deal from both groups of social workers, and the profession will become what they want it to be. For success and especially for a strong beginning, it falls to them to consult well-experienced people and thus to develop contacts with other professionals in the region or elsewhere around the world.

5.2.6 Illustrative case studies

With such detailed expression of the sensibilities of different respondents and especially the social work practitioners, a warning is explicitly sounded that the inextricable social problems South Africa and Rwanda are faced with will not be effectively combated unless there is a meticulous and democratic involvement of the communities concerned. The following case studies (two from Rwanda: combating poverty and HIV/AIDS respectively; and two from South Africa: one on child protection and the other on volunteering activities) intend to demonstrate how the role of the people in addressing their own problems in their respective localities is valuable and feasible.

All that is required in such cases are suitable structures and devoted helpers. Here, the contribution of social welfare organisations is highlighted. More particularly, it will be noted that the presence of assiduous and well-skilled social work professionals – unfortunately still a major lack in Rwanda – within such organisations is of great importance for enabling the population – and most importantly the vulnerable groups – to participate successfully in the resolution of their problems, and to shape their own future.

5.2.6.1 Facing poverty through small income-generating projects: PISTE's initiative

Illustrative Case 1: PISTE, a German NGO in Rwanda is committed to fighting poverty

For a little more than five years, PISTE (a Programme for Social, Technical and Economic Initiatives) has been active in Rwanda by participating in the rehabilitation and social reintegration of the population, especially those most affected by problems due to the genocide. At the end of the emergency period, as defined by the government, PISTE was one of the rare NGOs to realise that people, instead of moving ahead and trying to cope with problems on their own, were still expecting donations and all kinds of assistance for starting various projects.

With the development phase that started in 2000, the government recommended that all partners probe how to make the population more aware of its responsibilities and to stimulate it to participate actively to the development process. Accordingly, PISTE was convinced that it is never helpful to "give a man a fish and not to teach him how to fish". And in addition, it agreed to provide the fisherman with fishing tackle. In fact, PISTE has chosen to work with the newly emerging decentralised structures at local level, and to involve them in the management of the local Fund for Projects Financing (FAP)¹⁹, set up in different administrative sectors. Its strategy for the financial period 2002-2004 in Butare Province (Butare Town and Save Districts) is to promote initiatives of and on behalf of poor people, and the prudent disposition of these by discouraging the donation system and replacing it with short-term loans.

The main principle is to grant the loan to a competent group of people who may show a solidarity guarantee. They are not obliged to run a similar activity but they must regularly monitor one another and this obliges them to be honest persons, commonly called "INYANGAMUGAYO" in Kinyarwanda. This control is based on specific criteria: the reimbursement at due date; voluntary savings; active participation in the meetings planned by the group/association, and the performance in management.

The local committee (including some local authorities in charge of the development) responsible for the management of "IKIGEGA" decides to release the loan after the following specific steps have been completed:

- Grouping of people on the basis of their state of poverty;

¹⁹ The FAP, IKIGEGA in Kinyarwanda, is regularly provided with an increasing amount of money from the reimbursements of loans granted by PISTE to the population. At the end of 2004, PISTE will divide the possible remaining budget between the different FAP which will continue the project system.

- *Choice of name, which very often defines the objective, the solidarity aspect, understanding and mutual cooperation among the group members;*
- *Setting of the number of group members;*
- *Internal regulation;*
- *Election of the steering committee and*
- *The formal application for the loan.*

➔ *Source: Visit in the field and interviews.*

The philosophy of PISTE is quite interesting especially in the long-term view. In fact, beyond the ultimate objective of generating income, people will be strengthening the social capital, the reconciliation process will be promoted, and self-assistance will be benefited in the respective neighbourhoods. In this way, poverty will be progressively defeated at its very roots.

However, what remains to be done is to sufficiently empower the people. Indeed, during two sensitisation meetings attended during the research, it was observed that the population is highly interested in the new approach, but there is a great need for permanent information and training. This requires enough qualified personnel, and preferably social workers, at local level for empowering people in collaboration with local authorities who need themselves to be well trained in various contexts. There is still much to do in this regard and it is a huge challenge!

5.2.6.2 Strengthening social solidarity in fighting HIV/AIDS: the case of IGITI CY'UBUGINGO

Illustrative case 2: The experience of Igiti cy'Ubugingo Centre in the Province/Diocese of Butare in addressing HIV/AIDS

Igiti cy'Ubugingo or Tree of Life is a centre run by the Medical Missionaries of Mary (MMM), a religious community mandated by the Catholic Diocese of Butare in conjunction with Butare Province. When it started in June 2000, the centre targeted particularly the vulnerable women who survived as sex workers. (A study conducted by the Ministry of Health in 1998 on "Women and survival prostitution in Rwanda" showed that of the 2 498 women identified as sex workers in five Provinces, 598 (or 21.8%) were from Butare). The project is funded by different sponsors such as Trocaire-Kigali, Trocaire-Ireland, Gorta through Irish AID, PNUD, some private people and overseas benefactors.

Igiti cy'Ubugingo favours the multisectoral approach and pursues the following specific objectives:

- a) To build the capacity of the staff and the community to promote the attitudinal and behavioural changes that are required to promote a healthier and more harmonious environment and to effectively control the spread of HIV;*
- b) To enable vulnerable women, namely women victims of rape and women engaged for survival in the sex-trade – at risk of becoming infected or already infected with HIV- to have a better quality of life, to care and make provision for their children, and to die with dignity;*
- c) To enable groups and communities to become more self-reliant and take care of their members living with HIV/AIDS in a way that is effective and compassionate.*

Beyond the medical treatment and regular training of the service users, the growing spirit of solidarity, trust and hope among these people is very encouraging. The women – who are not usually accommodated at the centre – manage to set up mixed development associations comprising the HIV infected (38% officially known so far), the syphilis sufferers (14% of the clients tested) and healthy women. These associations are preferably formed according to home locality because the members may work together and so have to live in nearby neighbourhoods. The centre conducts its external activities through the local Christian structures and the believers are enthusiastic and help voluntarily to bring about reintegration of HIV/AIDS victims in the community. It is very interesting that the centre's regular service users/clients participate in the sensitisation sessions and the family visits. Some indicators in terms of encouraging results show that:

- Regular attenders are happier.
- The women feel less alone. Some have recovered a certain sense of their dignity: **'They no longer call me –Indaya –the prostitute!'**
- The healing touch of reflexology has helped them to discover their ability to do good to themselves and to help others.
- Education, a new sense of themselves, more companionship and the use of micro-projects has helped some to move out of prostitution, others to reduce the number of partners and to know how to protect themselves.
- The fact that the service users are treated medically encourages other sex-workers to join the programme and to seek a better life.
- There is progressively a behavioural change among the people (e.g. 150 young people in Nyamiyaga have already decided to proceed with HIV/AIDS tests). Furthermore, the local Christian structures select voluntary persons who receive formal training from the centre and this is increasing assistance. There are also some emerging initiatives of groups that are interested in running income-generating projects in order to help the HIV/AIDS victims.

This experience is really significant and should be a model for different associations of HIV/AIDS victims within the country (around 70 associations), especially with regard to the co-membership aspect (by encouraging the close involvement of healthy people!); it should be replicated after a systematic summative evaluation. However, regular and efficient follow-up is urgently needed, and this will depend on the possibility of increasing qualified personnel, especially in social work (one assistant social worker is not enough!).

➔ Source: *First published Programme report; interview with the administrator-in-charge of the Programme and results of field observation.*

The survival of HIV/AIDS victims as well as the limitation of the spread of the pandemic will depend on the concerted determination of the victims themselves and of healthy people. Such a vision is being experimented with by Igiti cy'Ubugingo and the expected success is based on the recognition of the victims as human beings and their real collaboration with other people in the community. The positive results so far are probably influenced in a great part by religious initiatives through local Catholic structures. In fact, believers are repeatedly taught to love and help one another without

any discrimination and so they tend to take initiatives which place them at the forefront in combating the disease and assisting the victims. Such structures are undoubtedly useful channels for community social workers in their daily activities.

5.2.6.3 Experience of ECP in child protection

Illustrative Case 3: The experience of Isolabantwana "Eye on the Children Project (ECP)"

ECP is a special community-based child protection project launched by the Cape Town Child Welfare Society in 1997. Its uniqueness is founded on the demonstration of how empowered communities can successfully fight child abuse. A key feature of this project is that community volunteers are authorised to undertake work that only social workers and members of the police force were previously authorised to undertake. A second key feature of the project is the integral involvement of members of the community in the project and the real power that is vested in their hands. This is reflected in the control the community exercises over the project as a co-coordinating committee, and the power which community elected volunteers have to intervene in incidences of alleged child abuse and neglect, including the power to remove children if necessary.

There is an enormous amount to learn from ECP, especially with regard to the social workers' assiduity and the volunteers' spirit of abnegation – 'In order to succeed in our mission, we very often meet with the targeted communities, we have to gain the people's trust, to listen to them and to be interested in their concern without being in a hurry... You know, I am Muslim but as a convinced social worker, I very often attend the Sunday Christian Services with the ultimate objective to prove to people that I like to be with and to share all things with them. Thus they regularly see my face. Definitely, they trust me and we can talk openly.'

The social workers:

- Facilitate training of volunteers attached to the programme and provide them with support through regular supervisions. The training programme is based on 10 sessions scrupulously attended by the volunteers who receive a certificate after a specified test. (See programme training in Appendix F.)*
- Evaluate action and follow up on cases referred.*
- Plan, in consultation with volunteers, the future management of a family and child.*

Once accredited and authorised by Commissioners of Child Welfare to undertake their work, the 'Eyes' (Volunteers) become fully the empowered helpers of their own communities. They

are respected and they sacrifice generously as much time as they can to child protection. They usually assess reported cases of alleged/actual child abuse and neglect; counsel and monitor children at risk; place children in protective care or refer cases to relevant resources when necessary; and support and counsel families in crisis. Very often, they organise the awareness campaigns and also contribute to the prevention talks in schools.

Since the inception of ECP, there has been a major change (e.g. a 20% decrease in intake of child abuse and neglect cases from the target communities). Finally, it is important to note that the transfer of power from professionals into the hands of the community and charging the community with the responsibility of caring for and protecting their children has proved to be a groundbreaking initiative in dealing with abused, neglected, abandoned and vulnerable children.

➔ *Source: Annual Report 2000-2001, Cape Town Child Welfare Society; Newsletter, 2001. Isolabantwana and interview results.*

This case typifies clearly the fundamental role of social work professionals within social welfare organisations. They assist in dealing with a range of social problems as well as in creating social and environmental conditions to enhance the quality of people's lives. Here, they act as advocates, educators, counsellors, facilitators, mediators, organisers, empowerers and supervisors.

On the other hand, an important lesson can be learnt, namely, that social workers of today and tomorrow have to provide their services in partnership with members of local communities, who are definitely more fully aware of and continuously closer to the problems occurring in their neighbourhoods.

Finally, one could say that acting in favour of children and families constitutes primary concern for the future of society. However, the full success of children's protection, as well as their socialisation or reintegration, will depend on their effective participation in the problem-solving process. Indeed, contrary to the conventional attitude that children are inferior, ignorant of the issues and thus are seldom consulted, it emerges that they could be more encouraged and become deeply involved in the programme

process. Accordingly, frequent listening to children will undoubtedly help to discover many elements that may be overlooked or not revealed by adults.

5.2.6.4 Volunteering at tertiary institutions: the case of Matie Community Service

Illustrative Case 4: Volunteering programme at Matie Community Service (MCS) – Stellenbosch

Matie Community Service is a non-profit organization, linked to the University of Stellenbosch, that runs programmes from the Stellenbosch, Tygerberg and Saldanha campuses. Founded in 1964 through the initiative of students who wanted to render services in local communities, it has been adapting to the realities in these communities over the course of time. Nowadays, the foci of MCS are on providing people with development opportunities and identifying community needs that dovetail with the abilities and time constraints of student volunteers.

*MCS operates under the vision “**Together we grow**” and with the special mission of “**Empowerment towards sustainable development**”. To make this happen, one of its three aims is “**To utilise the students, the resources, the expertise and co-workers of the Stellenbosch University, as well as co-workers and resources outside the university**”. As stated by Prof Cornie Groenewald, Chairperson of the management board (in MCS, 2001:2), “**MCS is committed to the empowerment of people, organisations and communities, and to achieve this ideal establishes partnerships at all levels.**”*

At the beginning of the academic year 2002 at the University of Stellenbosch, 155 students volunteered to dedicate an average of three and a half hours per week to community service. According to their preferences, they were divided into five groups for the projects: Adult literacy classes (52); Entrepreneurship development (33); Life orientation-children (30); People with disabilities (27); and other (13). These junior volunteers have been working under the guidance of the project leaders (senior volunteers) and the administrative and logistical co-ordination of a student volunteer committee. The programme managers of the respective domains take full responsibility for the success, continuity and broader networking of the projects.

A mid-year evaluation conducted in May 2002 furnished evidence of the effectiveness of the volunteering programme at MCS. The students expressed their real interest and happiness for

having undertaken such activities. They appreciated the atmosphere at MCS, the loyalty, dedication, competence, sociability and respect of the staff. In this connection, 71% of the respondents asserted that they had already recommended volunteering at MCS to their friends, while 86% indicated that they were changed by the voluntary work that they had done. With regard to the changes, respondents referred to changes in self-image and professional growth (*"It contributed to my development as a community worker"*). *"It has made me realise that I might be able to teach others which has helped me to decide what I want to do when I finish my studies"*); attitude changes (*"I have learned to be more open to people who are different from me and to have patience and compassion with others"*) and skills development.

Briefly, from the students' perspective, it is evident that they experience volunteering to be very rewarding, that it offers opportunities in terms of the development of relevant marketable skills, personal growth, as well as a broader academic perspective. On this point, the Rector and Vice Chancellor of the University of Stellenbosch (in MCS, 2000: 3 and MCS, 2001: 2) states that *"Students develop an understanding of the insights of disciplines other than those they are studying. They develop appropriate skills and attitudes that will equip them to handle the demands of a changing society... No teaching programme is complete if it does not also help to build character and encourage dedication to the country and its citizens. The university is therefore proud, not only of what its students achieve through their involvement with Matie Community Service, but also the quality of the leadership that is being developed in this way."*

This type of connection and way of working between MCS and the University of Stellenbosch is highly commendable as an example of how universities, instead of remaining and acting as an 'ivory tower', can be a veritable source of invaluable humus from which the seeds of social development can continuously thrive. Tertiary institutions have the capacity to help solve social problems by combining their expertise and the available people-power through well-designed community service programmes.

➔ **Source:** - Burger, L. 2002. *Volunteering at tertiary institutions. Case study: Matie Community Service.*

- *Annual reports 2000 and 2001, Matie Community Service.*

MCS can be proud that its volunteer programme is gaining more and more credibility with the university, funders, and the community within which it is operating. Finally, it is encouraging for social work departments that, amongst the limited MCS staff, there

are knowledgeable and highly skilled social work professionals who play a significant role for the enhancement of the reputation of their organisation. For this specific programme, their role is centred on administration and management, networking, coordinating, planning, evaluation, empowerment, supervision and research.

It is very interesting here to note the requisite partnership between social welfare organisations and university institutions for the substantial promotion of social development. In fact, the latter (university institutions) have tremendous abilities that they can use through these organisations in the fulfilment of one of their main tasks, namely serving the community. In addition, academics gain knowledge and improve their theories in continuous and interactive relationships with practitioners.

5.2.6.5 Concluding comment: community work at the heart of social development

It emerges from the four previous case studies that social welfare organisations in South Africa and Rwanda favour community work in their endeavours to promote social development. In Rwanda, specific conclusions could not yet be drawn, considering the short period of experience, but in South Africa, the palpable achievements evident in the case of the two organisations chosen, help us to understand the effectiveness of the method in question.

In general, it is important to bear in mind that **community work plays** an invaluable role in addressing social problems especially at a time when the world, and developing countries in particular, are faced more than ever with serious upheavals and socio-economic challenges such as poverty, social conflicts, disasters, disease, unemployment and homelessness. To get round these problems undoubtedly entails a "**collective effort**", and accordingly, the need to "*consider the problems of individuals not only in the context of their interactions with family and peers, but in the context of wider relationships and interactions in the community where they live*" (Cunningham, 1974: 54). In other words, this consideration constrains all those involved in the problem-solving process to take into consideration the principles and characteristics of community work. These are summarised as follows:

- Community work intends to **bring about social change**;
- It is concerned with helping people **to work together to address social problems**;
- It is a **developmental process** of assisting people **to improve their own communities**;
- It particularly seeks to work with people experiencing disadvantage by **empowering them**;
- Its main strategy is based on a "popular development strategy in which the **people are the agents, means and end of the developmental process**".

Several models of community practice, including community development, have been proposed by different authors and some examples are presented in **Appendices G and H**.

Conclusion

In this chapter, it has been demonstrated that South Africa and Rwanda are enduring very difficult situations and are attempting to cope with complex social problems such as poverty, HIV/AIDS, family disintegration and unemployment. It has been shown that poverty constitutes the root of a range of other social problems but, very often, it is also fuelled by these.

It is important to bear in mind that social problems are intertwined, both in South Africa and Rwanda, and thus require systemic responses. Finding such responses entails taking into consideration both social and economic realities, which is the ultimate objective of the social development model. This model is particularly cherished and strongly recommended by the government of South Africa. Furthermore, it has been emphasised that the implementation of this model is facilitated by the use of community work approaches and these may be particularly based on the process of community development.

For community development to happen, devoted agents of change must get down to the serious work of the general improvement of people's lives especially those of the most vulnerable.

"*This requires brave, bold, conscientious and principled people.*"²⁰ Social workers are amongst the most appropriate role players for promoting the developmental perspective even if they are still variously disparaged and sometimes obliged to "act at their own risk". They are confident of the best future of the profession and they are ready to defend it.

It has been observed throughout the research findings that social workers are seriously devoted to their profession and they are firmly determined to change their negative public image "more through their actions than through simple words". This is in fact possible, especially with the new developmental social work orientation. To give an example, palpable results are emerging in South Africa where objective programmes are taking root and being implemented in different social welfare organisations; some inspiring cases have been described.

Social workers in South Africa will probably progress further as they have sufficient possibilities and facilities that could help them to protect their profession. They are in fact highly knowledgeable and skilled, and they can consequently give valuable input to policy-makers, and competently interact with various other relevant people (politicians, administrators, scientists or theorists) in the promotion of social development. Furthermore, South African social work professionals have a clear government policy, namely the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997), which constitutes an adequate tool for the best accomplishment of their mission "to act as social change agents". Finally, there exist official channels through which they can express their grievances, the most important one being the SACSSP whose motto is NON NOBIS (Not for ourselves). The Council's role is usually "*to be the determining, guiding and directing authority body within the structure of the social service professions*".

The Rwandan situation is not altogether negative but the pathway is still long in terms of social welfare and social work development. The observations related to the South African experience, particularly at educational level, could be helpfully applied to

²⁰ *President Mbeki in his Address at the opening of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, 26 August 2002.*

Rwanda. In this connection, the social work actors in Rwanda are moderately skilled and professionally very dependent. But with regard to the perspectives, there is an encouraging future if one considers the bravery of the students in the social work option at the NUR. Great promise could in fact be placed in the level of education that is being provided and in the framework that is developing progressively in the country, especially through the decentralisation policy, which will help social workers to practise their profession with the full involvement of the population.

Chapter 6 Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter first summarises general conclusions and recommendations of the study. In effect, a specific message for the promotion of social development is directed both to Rwanda and South Africa. Then some themes for further investigation are highlighted, and finally, a special section is reserved for the case of Rwanda, in which a discussion ensues about how to address the social challenges facing the country.

6.1 Summary of general conclusions and recommendations

6.1.1 Main conclusions and derived recommendations

A number of conclusions or recommendations emerged during the study and are scattered throughout different chapters. Here, the main ones are presented under the headings: need for social development, role and legitimacy of social work, participation and empowerment of service users, and social work training and practice.

♠ Need for social development

It emerges from the information presented in the study that in the aftermath of apartheid in South Africa and the genocide in Rwanda, both countries have been making efforts towards addressing the legacies of the past and promoting the quality of life of their respective peoples. However, the journey is still long if one considers the fragile state of human development in these countries and, as indicated by the participants in the study, the seriousness of inextricable social problems that cause increasing harm to their people. Definitely, the challenges of development remain substantial and broad. In other words, *there is a great need for social development in order to respond adequately to all kinds of social ills that continue to undermine hopes for a prosperous future.* On the other hand, *the developmental approach, which puts people at the centre of development strategies (and this is acknowledged effectively in South Africa), constitutes a suitable alternative to attaining social development.*

However, this approach is subject to various obstacles and its practice does not seem to be automatic (e.g. latent opposition of some bodies that continue to use outdated approaches, passivity of ordinary people and so forth). Therefore, some recommendations for various scenarios can be offered as follows:

- ♦ More than ever, the state, the private sector and civil society groups especially religious organisations, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations must unite hands and conduct a comprehensive campaign against the social challenges;
- ♦ The South African and Rwandan governments have to fully rebuild their social fabric, to emphasise unity and reconciliation and then, to strengthen people-driven development;
- ♦ The state has to mobilise resources for the development of basic infrastructures especially in rural areas, and for the creation of opportunities for productive employment among low-income and special-needs groups;
- ♦ In all cases, maximisation of people participation in the economy and equitable distribution of the fruits of economic growth must be kept in mind.

♣ **Role and legitimacy of social work**

The results of the theoretical as well as the empirical study show that social development and social work are complementary to each other. In fact, while the ultimate objective of the former is to achieve qualitative and quantitative changes in people's social conditions, the latter helps manifestly in the facilitation of the process. In general, social work is considered as one of the innately helping professions, caring for the welfare of individuals, families and communities. It seeks to promote social functioning, to encourage the development of people's inner strengths, and to support and enable them to create their own future themselves. Accordingly, it appears that *social work is of great necessity – especially in Rwanda – for advantageously promoting and guiding grassroots participation efforts to effect social change.*

During the research, social work students in focus group discussions and practitioners interviewed expressed great concern about the disparagement of their profession. In general, *social work is still questioned, lacks legitimacy and unfortunately, this*

situation will continue unless the profession demonstrates its capacity to contribute effectively to development. It is important to bear in mind that the future reputation of the profession will depend on social workers themselves, on the 'top-down legitimacy', but also the 'bottom-up legitimacy'. Therefore, it is recommended that:

a) Social workers:

- ♦ switch clearly from residual approaches to a developmental perspective, especially by practising more community work;
- ♦ set professional responsibility over personal interests;
- ♦ act as perfect managers of communities;
- ♦ be confident enough to promote their profession in society;
- ♦ commit themselves to rendering services, not because this is prescribed, but always with devotion and commitment to producing relevant outcomes.

b) The government:

- ♦ encourage more social work professionals in their daily activities especially at local level; increase and standardise their salaries;
- ♦ facilitate and promote the employment of social workers;
- ♦ acknowledge the importance of the role of social work professionals in policy-making.

c) Communities:

- ♦ be supportive, open and constantly tell social workers what they expect from them.

♣ Participation and empowerment of service users

The research findings emphasised the value of effective participation of service users in programmes relating to their needs. In fact, no programme planned without acknowledging the role of concerned communities in determining their own needs will function successfully; in addition, it is doubtful whether such a programme will motivate people to pursue their own social development. It is so important that people – and particularly disadvantaged groups – be stimulated and enabled to be agents of their own social inclusion. In this regard, *empowerment for valuable participation is a*

key precondition for social change and social development. It is therefore recommended to:

a) All social development agents:

- ♦ that they “... create a culture and society which respects the autonomy of the individual. In such a society, individuals are given the opportunity to realise their potential and to take potential for themselves and others.” (The Irish Department of Social Welfare in Powell, 2001: 97);
- ♦ that they act as servant leaders by creating a climate that supports individuals, groups and communities to make “things happen rather than have things happen to them”;
- ♦ that they promote openness, dialogue and trust towards service users.

b) The government in particular:

- ♦ to commit itself to participating in the implementation of the well-thought-out social welfare policies it sets up;
- ♦ to be in touch with the work that is conducted particularly at grassroots level and not to be unrealistic in expectations;

c) Social welfare organisations and social work professionals in particular:

- ♦ to promote the interdisciplinary approach and to work more from within a preventative perspective;
- ♦ to be veritable advocates and enablers of vulnerable people;
- ♦ to promote the formation of social capital and to make communities responsible defenders of the vulnerable people within their respective areas;
- ♦ to continuously assess their own actions and to adapt themselves accordingly to the service users’ needs;
- ♦ to promote the fundamental principles of social work, such as respect for individuals, acceptance, inclusiveness, collaboration with others and accountability.

♠ Social work training and practice

The uniqueness of social work will lie increasingly in the manner in which it deals with people’s social problems within complex and dynamic contexts like South Africa and Rwanda. Indicators for the measurement of the achievements of social work are to

be based on its contribution to the improvement of social functioning. For this to happen, neither practitioners nor academics, each party in its own ivory tower, can pretend to possess the secret of ways and means to help people cope efficiently with their social problems. In other words, *social work professionals need to be both skilful and knowledgeable in order to accomplish satisfactorily their ultimate mission to “help people help themselves.”* It is thus very important that:

- ◆ Social work theory and practice remain intertwined;
- ◆ Educational institutions adapt the social work curriculum to specific contexts within which practitioners will have to work; and this curriculum should, if possible, encompass much of social development, social policy and legislation, social pedagogy and human rights;
- ◆ Social work students and professionals constantly deepen their horizons, refer to the theories from other disciplines such as sociology and psychology and test these in their daily work;
- ◆ Social work students are provided with facilities for their practicals;
- ◆ Educational institutions develop and strengthen relationships with social welfare organisations, and academics include practical considerations in their research designs.

6.1.2 Value for Rwanda

The present study is undoubtedly of great value for Rwanda as it furnishes relevant information that could inspire this country on its journey of socio-economic transformation. Nowadays, Rwanda is more than ever determined to resolve the historical sufferings of its people and to struggle vigorously for the promotion of improved social welfare conditions for everyone by exploring various methods. Such a constructive vision is shared by a range of other countries, including South Africa, which have making efforts over a long period of time, in order to defeat the multiplicity of social evils they are faced with. The two countries have been dealing with the problems encountered by impoverished people and all categories of vulnerable groups. However, there is still a “... *failure to close the gap between the way people believe things should be and the way things really are*” (Coleman &

Cressey, 1980: 3). Accordingly, it remains to be seen WHO will do WHAT, and HOW for the materialisation of prosperous communities nationally as well as internationally.

The above constitute central questions about which the study can provide certain answers that could enlighten Rwanda for a better future. In this connection, the following key examples can serve as a special message for Rwanda:

- ♦ Social development is a process that seeks to find solutions to social problems.
- ♦ Social problems are “*not God-given, but are the creation of human society and human decision and actions*” (Mbeki, 2002). They are eminently solvable and/or preventable through human action.
- ♦ It is no longer beneficial to a society to pretend to find responses to social problems by reacting only to the personal problems of service users. Instead, it is more profitable to give top priority to “productivist social welfare activities” over “consumption-based services.” In fact, “*traditional social welfare programs... maintain needy people in unproductive and dependant situations... They are widely believed to detract from development efforts.*” (Hokenstad & Midgley, 1997: 19)
- ♦ Community-based services are the most suited to fostering social development, and these are likely to succeed once the members of the concerned communities interact in a manner that would make it possible for everyone to participate fully in the resolution of social problems and hence, in the whole development process. Indeed, if one considers the fact that in most countries, and particularly in developing countries, governments are progressively and severely suffering from a much heavier burden placed on them by economic fluctuations and the restrictions imposed by the main funders (e.g. IMF, World Bank), it is evident that the growing crisis in the welfare state remains unavoidable.

Accordingly, it becomes necessary to reverse the tendencies, and communities must be empowered to take responsibility for their own destinies. People must not continue to look upon the state as the “only saviour”, and the role of the latter should therefore be essentially policy-making, enabling, supporting and mobilising major institutions of the society to act for the promotion of social development.

- ♦ Social work is one of the best role players in community mobilisation, behavioural change, empowerment and participation, factors that constitute the main requisites for

helping people to manage their own development. Social work has therefore to be promoted for the operationalisation of social development.

6.1.3 Lessons for South Africa

Since 1994, South Africa has been initiating developmental social welfare policies and various related programmes have been making progress. However, it emerges from this study that specific achievements hide a continuous vicious cycle of particular "social enemies" like poverty, inequality, starvation, HIV/AIDS-related problems and so on, which aggravate the conditions of the disadvantaged at the lower levels of society. In this regard, some lessons can be taken in order to remove the barriers of such enemies, such as:

- ◆ It is important that the government and all stakeholders adhere scrupulously to the principles of the developmental perspective, and particularly, act as real servant-leaders.
- ◆ Local government, which is particularly considered to be the pivot of all forms of relationships and the foundation of social welfare promotion, has to be well equipped and helped to make people develop a new consciousness of the need for full participation in the process of their own development.
- ◆ Social workers, as competent practitioners among the helping professionals, should be given more consideration and encouraged to work more closely with the communities. Considering the extent of human needs in a rapidly changing society, social workers need to be further equipped with generic and integrated methods and skills. Their particular role will be to contribute to the empowerment of all categories of local people, particularly within the perspective of lessening the plight of vulnerable people.
- ◆ Vulnerable people are more than ever to be included in social transformation endeavours. Here, the establishment of local associations and the promotion of income-generating projects could be very useful.
- ◆ Systematic and interdisciplinary follow-up should be organised to assess what is really happening on the ground, and especially to monitor the social service programmes.

6.2 Recommendations for further study

It is important to repeat that the adoption of approaches that pay equal attention to economic and social issues promise the most for the improvement of people's lives in South Africa and Rwanda, as well as in other developing countries. It has been asserted that these approaches must ultimately lead to the creation of competent communities²¹. On the other hand, it has been upheld to be very useful in tackling social problems that those experiencing them are enabled to take some control.

In spite of much that has been achieved, it emerges from the study that much more needs to be done, especially in rural areas and in urban poor communities. In fact, it seems that rural areas have always been neglected in favour of urban areas, which causes a continuous migration of poor people from the countryside to towns, where they contribute further to impoverished conditions. Therefore, it is highly recommended that an *investigation should be aimed at establishing how social work could contribute effectively to the promotion of rural development and to the limitation of such depopulation, or how to instil in vulnerable people (the poor, women, HIV/AIDS victims and so forth) as well as groups at risk (youth in particular) a new vision of thinking globally while building on local potential and inner strength.* Furthermore, it is advisable *to assess the pertinence, opportunities and feasibility of the return of vulnerable people to rural areas from towns, and to examine the role of social workers in this process.*

In terms of the concern regarding women who are not only amongst the most vulnerable people but also expected to play an important role in social development, especially in Rwanda where, after the genocide, they constitute about 53% of the whole population, it is advisable *to conduct an in-depth assessment of their potential to intervene strongly in the reconstruction of the social fabric.* Most importantly, it would be interesting *to examine the specific contribution of women qualified as social workers or acting as assistant social workers – and at present, they constitute the majority of social work professionals – for the promotion of social welfare conditions.* As Gray states (1998: 136), social workers are in fact “... *believed to be more than*

²¹ According to Netting (1993: 41), competent communities are those that provide mutual support regardless of who is in need.

adequately equipped for this task with their myriad skills in dealing with people on an individual, group, community and policy level.” Unfortunately, realities do not match expectations and, as indicated by participants in the study, social workers are widely disparaged, and hence, their role is minimised. Thus for example, an analysis of the situation should help to discover what has been wrong and what needs to be resolved concerning *the role of social work professionals in healing the gender imbalances for sustainable development.*

Finally, it is recommended that *regular and rigorous evaluative studies of social service programmes be carried out.* These studies should consist of *summative or formative evaluation*: summative for enlightening policy-makers and other interested bodies, and helping them to decide about the orientation of social welfare policies or activities; formative for helping social welfare organisations to improve the implementation of their social programmes, and especially to plan and manage the future.

6.3 Recommendations for addressing social development challenges in Rwanda

In closing this dissertation, a recapitulatory presentation on the ways and means of promoting social development in Rwanda becomes opportune. On the basis of the challenges facing the country, four main recommendations are made under the following headings:

- Setting up a national social welfare policy;
- Strengthening social work training;
- Promoting the partnership *community–social welfare organisations–university*;
- Promoting community work for successful social development.

These recommendations relate potentially to the need for social welfare promotion and could be among the best strategies for achieving Rwanda’s Vision 2020 targets, which are²²:

- ◆ To no longer be classified as Least Developed Country by the year 2020;

²² For more details, see Republic of Rwanda, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (2001: 29-32).

- ◆ To reduce poverty by half by the year 2015;
- ◆ To maintain and develop good governance;
- ◆ To achieve 100% primary school enrolment by the year 2010;
- ◆ To achieve gender equal enrolment in universities by the year 2020;
- ◆ To reduce infant mortality by two-thirds by the year 2015;
- ◆ To reduce maternal mortality by two-thirds by the year 2015;
- ◆ To achieve food security for all by the year 2020;
- ◆ To increase exports as percentage of GDP threefold by the year 2020; and
- ◆ To develop an environmental plan by 2005.

6.3.1 Setting up a national social welfare policy

Rwanda is a country that has experienced suffering in the past, and is still suffering, possibly more than ever, as a result of the tyranny of its history. It has been caught up in a vicious circle of apparently inextricable problems. Nowadays, Rwanda is at a crossroads, moving from a humanitarian assistance phase associated with the 1994 genocide, into a process of sustainable development. In this transition, it is faced with various socio-economic challenges including the following:

- Poverty and human misery;
- Disease and general well-being of people;
- HIV/AIDS and its impact on children, families and communities;
- Reinforcement of national unity and reconciliation;
- Rebuilding psycho-social trust;
- Good governance;
- Macro-economic stability and human resource development.

Given this brief description, it could be asked if Rwanda is capable of addressing and preventing all known and unknown problems, of restructuring the social fabric and of relieving the community of its problems generally. The Government of Rwanda is, in

all instances, determined to correct what went wrong over generations, and is determined to strengthen socio-economic policies with relevant strategies that are to be built up to the year 2020.

In terms of national social welfare policy, it is definitely necessary to hasten its elaboration in order to avoid fragmentation of the welfare function and confusion about roles and responsibilities. Such a policy will limit the implementors, such as various government departments or agencies, from finding scapegoats to carry any failure in serving people adequately, particularly the vulnerable groups.

The social policy in question must not be concerned only with social services and the welfare state. Instead, it must be understood in a broader sense in which it *“stands for a range of issues extending far beyond the actions of government – the means by which welfare is promoted, and the social and economic conditions which shape the development of welfare”* (The Robert Gordon University, from <http://www2.rgu.ac.uk/publicpolicy/introduction/socpolf.htm> Visited on 20/09/2002).

It is important to bear in mind that policy-makers will have to acknowledge the peoples' participation in the policy-making process²³ especially at the following levels: policy formulation, dialogue, implementation, monitoring and evaluation because the needs and sentiments of these people must be reflected, and above all, because they are intended to become progressively masters of their own development.

As some ordinary people are not well informed about their rights or able to correctly express their grievances, they must be defended or represented altruistically – never in an opportunistic way – by the most privileged and influential people in the society. These latter should have the capacities to listen to the former, and to communicate with and advocate for them. Well-skilled social workers, considered as *“the voice of the people”* by some Rwandan informants, are classified among such dedicated representatives and important empowerers. Once again, social work training is considered necessary to move increasingly towards social development in Rwanda.

²³ De Coning and Fich quoted by De Beer and Swanepoel (2000: 88) divide the policy process into eight phases, namely policy initiation, policy process design, policy analysis, policy formulation, policy decision, policy dialogue, policy implementation, and policy monitoring and evaluation.

6.3.2 Strengthening social work training at the NUR

It is widely recognised that the three core functions of a modern university are teaching, research and community service. There is no doubt that social work education at the NUR as a practice-oriented profession will help to energise the interaction between the NUR and the community "at all levels with special emphasis on rural areas" as stipulated by the objectives the university aims to achieve. To make this happen, all the promoters of social work education at higher level in Rwanda, and particularly the NUR, must recognise that the idea is timely as the social work profession, while entering its second century and the new millennium, is taking new and updated directions that fit the exigencies of social development.

Accordingly, it falls to the above agents to set up the most professional curriculum for Rwanda in reference to established African universities like the South African ones, while considering national realities as well as international standards. At the same time, it is the task of the NUR/social work option to connect an "umbilical cord" to the secondary schools in order to attract candidates to the field, and especially to admit more deserving assistant social workers who are aspiring to continue their studies at university level, and who are already well initiated in the discipline.

The social work curriculum in particular needs to be enriched, especially since the second year as the first one (see content in **section 5.2.5.2**) seems to be adequate in helping the students to acquire general knowledge, and constitutes a sound foundation for tackling specific topics at the levels following. At the end of the first year, however, it could be helpful to organise seminars with the ultimate purpose of briefing specifically the students about the social work profession. Afterwards, they should be enabled to conduct voluntary and preliminary activities within social welfare organisations in their respective communities (preferably during holidays).

Without furnishing detailed curriculum content, it would appear useful to suggest a certain orientation for the elaboration of relevant programmes. First of all, it is important to bear in mind that the social work option/department at the NUR, as elsewhere and in other universities, has to train highly qualified people who will help

to promote better socio-economic conditions for the population at individual, family and community levels.

In this regard, the general educational framework must target the micro-, mezzo- and macro-levels. Accordingly, the theoretical as well as practical principles have to focus on the fundamental methods of social work, namely **case work**, **group** and **community work**. On the other hand, it is necessary to emphasise the **integrated approach** because, as previously shown, the current realities, particularly in developing countries, require new orientations in social work practice and these favour the ecological or developmental models. However, subjects relating indirectly to social work practice, comprising supervision, social work research, social work management and administration, must not be neglected.

In concrete terms, the social work curriculum should include the following components, among others:

- ♦ Introduction to social work theory
- ♦ Introduction to social work and social welfare
- ♦ Socio-economic rights in Rwanda
- ♦ Introduction to social work methods
- ♦ Sociology
- ♦ Social psychology
- ♦ Social problems and vulnerable groups
- ♦ Social organisation and contemporary issues in Rwandan social welfare
- ♦ Communication skills in social work practice
- ♦ Civil law
- ♦ Social work intervention towards individuals/families (Case work)
- ♦ Social work intervention towards groups (Group work)
- ♦ Social work intervention towards communities (Community work)
- ♦ Developmental social work / Integrated approach in social work
- ♦ Social work administration

- ♦ Social welfare policy and social work practice
- ♦ Poverty, development and social security
- ♦ Social pathology
- ♦ Child and family welfare
- ♦ Gender, HIV/AIDS and sexuality
- ♦ Conflict resolution
- ♦ Intervention process at primary, secondary and tertiary levels
- ♦ Social work management
- ♦ Community-centred research
- ♦ Supervision.

In connection with the practical education curriculum, it is advisable to conceive of it on the basis of achievable objectives, and with reference to the national policy and legislation framework relating to social service provision and human rights protection. On the other hand, this curriculum must take into consideration the situation of vulnerable people within the community, and the most disadvantaged should be given the highest priority.

The number of hours for this programme should vary according to the level concerned. For example in the second year, one half day (± 4 hours) per week for participant observation within social welfare organisations would be enough. In the third year, a whole day per week (± 7 hours) is advisable, while in the fourth year, two days per week would seem to be sufficient. In each instance, the writing and presentation of field reports, with variable weight of course, should be required.

In order to facilitate the placement of students for their practicals, the creation of synergies between the department of social sciences / social work option and different social welfare organisations and NGOs is an important necessity. This will undoubtedly help the NUR to nurture its permanent programme of community service. Further details on how to promote the relationships between social welfare organisations and the NUR for the improvement of the community's well-being are given below.

6.3.3 Promoting the partnership community–social welfare organisations–university

The NUR's motto is "Illuminatio et Salus Populi" or the "Light and Salvation of the People". Therefore, the NUR is more strongly than ever, and especially in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide, committed to participating actively to the "Rwandan Renaissance" – the long process of resolving the legacies of the nightmares that Rwandans have endured. The means the NUR will use are those of supporting and helping the Rwandans to create their own futures, and to be able to deepen their horizons in order to meet the multiple challenges of an ever changing world.

The university's major task today is to produce outcomes relevant to the needs of those who live beyond the campus walls, and ultimately, to focus on "... *the translation of academic knowledge into forms that are usable for nonacademics, and the conversion of nonacademic knowledge into forms that are usable for academics*" (Tierney, 1999: 168). This aim concerns all the faculties, schools and particularly the departments, each one in its own specialty, but for the same purpose, namely to rebuild the society and achieve social development.

In the instance of the Department of Social Sciences within which social work operates, the outcomes will depend more on the promotion of the partnership with the social welfare organisations. These latter serve perfectly as an important bridge to access the community. In fact, the practitioners within such organisations are in constant interaction with the masses, hold the necessary information about the possibilities or weaknesses of the areas they work in, and thus are in a good position to guide academics or to link them with community members for whatever purpose.

Definitely, the development of such relationships helps to deepen the understanding of scientific and/or social phenomena and to define suitable ways of serving ordinary people correctly. To be more responsive to the community's needs, it is advisable for the social work option:

- ♦ to promote extensive communication networks within the community;

- ♦ to increase the number and frequency of research projects in conjunction with practitioners, and to disseminate the results in due course and in an accessible style;
- ♦ to promote social marketing on the campus and its surroundings in order to make as many people as possible aware of social problems (particularly elites who often play a substantially influential role in society);
- ♦ to advocate on behalf of vulnerable people and above all, to empower them, which means to enable them to take control of their own development and to have the power to shape their own lives;
- ♦ throughout their training, social work students must internalise, among other things, the principles of confidentiality, human rights, a non-judgemental attitude, acceptance, self-determination, non-violence, inclusiveness, creativity, accountability, self-reliance, empowerment, cooperation, consensus, participation and sustainability. By doing this, they will be able to work with, and not simply for, service users in the community.

On the whole, the social workers of tomorrow in Rwanda must be trained in accordance with the socio-economic context of today, but without ignoring the realities of yesterday. This entails the need to master and practise all the social work methods, but with strong preference for community work as the most efficient method. A specific orientation for its optimal practice is proposed in the following sub-section.

6.3.4 Promoting community work for the success of social development: a suitable orientation

For the best national transformation, everyone (especially the leaders) is convinced that a **grassroots participation** in decision-making, and an effective **empowerment of all groups** have to be promoted first and foremost. But how can this be done, and using what specific approaches? In this case, there is no doubt that **community work**, mainly **based on a community development model**, is one of the vital pillars and thus a very suitable method in the achievement of major new government policy initiatives.

In fact, community work can be employed as a means to achieving maximum outputs in social intervention domains. Furthermore, it should revive the traditional **practice of solidarity**, and hence reinforce **social capital**, which is a veritable resource on which to build a sense of community.²⁴ Here, it is very important to note that traditionally in Rwanda, informal but well-established kinship and community structures existed which provided social welfare care to those affected by death, disease, or hunger. The individual existed within the identity structure of the extended family and community, and kinship carried with it an extensive network of obligations and duties. These obligations and duties protected vulnerable individuals in times of difficulty.

Community development is one of the models initiated by various social work specialists such as Rothman and Tropman (1987) and Weil and Gamble (1994). The approaches presented by these authors are outlined in **Appendices G and H**. For Rothman and Tropman in particular, three models are relevant, namely: locality development (community development), social planning and social action. Rothman and Tropman describe these models taking into consideration several specific dimensions or criteria including the needs of clients/service users, the clients, the change strategy, the goals pursued, the role of social worker, and outcomes.

With regard to community development, it emerges from these authors' considerations that the needs of service users (taken as effective participants) encompass a range of components such as skills, empowerment and possibility of collaboration. The change strategy favours objective and consensual methods and promotes the involvement of people in the issues that affect their lives. There is clarity and consensus on the definition of the goals, and the role of the social worker throughout the process is to act as teacher, enabler, facilitator and organiser of groups. The outcomes resulting from this form of work are usually empowerment, capacity building, release, confidence, establishment and reinforcement of capacity networks.

²⁴ According to Lang and Hornburg as cited by Rubin, H.J and Rubin, I.S. (2001: 97), building community means creating or increasing peoples' feelings of social solidarity, that is, the sense of belonging to and feeling responsible for a group or territory. Community is built on social capital, "the stocks of social trust, norms, and networks that people can draw upon in order to solve common problems".

Briefly, community development aims at community change through the broadest possible participation of local community members. Above all, it emphasises democratic procedures, voluntary cooperation, self-help, and focuses on the *indigenous*²⁵.

It is important to mention that in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide, the socio-economic transformation in Rwanda cannot be advanced entirely automatically. Accordingly, in addition to the community development model – at the heart of the sustainable socio-economic development process – other forms of community work are necessary that involve **neighbourhood and community organising**²⁶, **social planning and social action**. The neighbourhood model, which can be considered as a sub-model of community development, is suggested to emphasise the point that operating at base level implies worthwhile success. This is particularly shown by Sonoff (2000: 7) who states: "*It is important for community building to take place at the neighborhood level, because this allows for frequent face-to-face interaction and the ability for people to get to know each other in order to establish mutual trust.*"

In terms of **social planning** and **social action**, these will help respectively – at certain levels – to solve some particular problems with regard to expertise, and to appreciably alleviate the pain of the vulnerable. The social action model will be used specifically to relieve the groups that are most affected, such as women – and children-headed households, unemployed and unskilled youth, the elderly, the disabled, the urban dwellers, people living in structurally stricken regions, and HIV/AIDS victims. Very briefly, the two supplementary approaches can be summarised as follows using Barber's terms (1991: 62):

²⁵ When talking about the change process in Africa, Maloka and Le Roux (2001: 19) argue that "The socio-economic transformation in Africa cannot be advanced effectively unless those involved in this process take seriously the realities of African societies as they are and not as they ought to be. This implies that sustainable socio-economic development can only be realised if it is based on the indigenous. The indigenous is not necessarily what is traditional but whatever the African masses regard to be an authentic expression of themselves."

²⁶ Cf. Weil and Gamble in Edwards (1995: 581).

- Social planning approaches concentrate on the technical process of problem-solving with regard to specific social problems such as unemployment, housing or health;
- Social action approaches are said to encompass methods directed at redistributing power, resources or decision-making by moving them away from the more powerful and towards the less powerful sections of the community.

While applying these approaches, the role of the **social community worker** will vary, considering the opportunities offered. He/she, in addition to what has already been mentioned, will act as researcher, negotiator, initiator, coordinator or mediator, advocate and public speaker.

In concluding, it needs to be said that Rwanda is at a dangerous bend where those who are in control will have to be very careful in order not to endanger all the travellers. In other words, people have to be satisfactorily guided and integrated into the socio-economic development process. It is advisable for the development agents **to adopt the community work method which is extensively based on the community development approach**. However, this method must not be analogised with community service: it is about involving the people themselves in defining their own needs and developing responses for themselves. It is not simply delivery of services to the community. In this noble task, what is asked of social change agents and especially of social community workers is ***‘NOT TO DO EXTRAORDINARY THINGS BUT TO DO ORDINARY THINGS EXTRAORDINARILY WELL’***.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Grid for data analysis (Interviews)

Category of analysis: SA: RW:

Respondents	Number (N)	Summary of responses	Frequencies if necessary	Main quotes
SWP				
SWL				
SWOM				
KI				
Results of observation				

Appendix B: Grid for data analysis (FGD)

Category of analysis: SA: RW:

Respondents	Number (N)	Summary of responses	Main quotes
FGD-US			
FGD-UWC			
FGD-NUR			
FGD-ENDP			
Results of observation			

Appendix C: Crucial social problems as mentioned by the participants in the study

Respondents Type of problem	South Africa (N = 38)								Rwanda (N = 47)							
	SWP (N = 13)		SWL (N = 11)		SWOM (N = 7)		KI (N = 7)		SWP (N = 20)		SWL (N = 5)		SWOM (N = 7)		KI (N = 15)	
Poverty	10	23.25%	10	23.25%	6	25%	6	21.42%	14	18.18%	5	19.23%	7	19.44%	13	19.69%
HIV/AIDS	8	18.60%	7	16.27%	4	16.66%	5	17.85%	11	14.28%	3	11.53%	5	13.88%	7	10.60%
Crime violence and deviance	6	13.95%	6	13.95%	4	16.66%	3	10.71%	9	11.68%	2	7.69%	5	13.88%	6	9.09%
Unemployment	5	11.62%	7	16.27%	4	16.66%	4	14.28%	8	10.38%	2	7.69%	2	5.55%	8	12.12%
Cultural depravity	3	6.97%	3	6.97%	2	8.33%	3	10.71%	5	6.49%	3	11.53%	3	8.33%	7	10.60%
Family desintegration	6	13.95%	6	13.95%	3	12.50%	5	17.85%	11	14.28%	4	15.38%	4	11.11%	12	18.18%
Ignorance	5	11.62%	4	9.30%	1	4.16%	2	7.14%	9	11.68%	3	11.53%	4	11.11%	6	9.09%
Consequences of genocide									10	12.98%	4	15.38%	6	16.66%	7	10.60%

Appendix D: Suitable approaches for the promotion of social development in Rwanda and South Africa

Respondents Approaches	South Africa (N = 38)								Rwanda (N = 47)							
	SWP (N = 13)		SWL (N = 11)		SWOM (N = 7)		KI (N = 7)		SWP (N = 20)		SWL (N = 5)		SWOM (N = 7)		KI (N = 15)	
Case work/Group work	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Community work	1	7,69%	3	27,27%	1	14,28%	1	14,28%	2	10%	0	0%	1	14,28%	5	33,33%
Group & Community work	1	7,69%	1	9,09%	0	0%	1	14,28%	3	15%	1	20%	2	28,57%	2	13,33%
Both with Case work as priority	3	23,07%	0	0%	2	28,57%	1	14,28%	3	15%	1	20%	1	14,28%	1	6,66%
Both with Community work as priority	8	61,53%	7	63,63%	4	57,14%	4	57,14%	11	55%	3	60%	3	42,85%	7	46,66%

Appendix E: Detailed information on the acceptance and working conditions of social workers per category of respondents

<div><div>Respondents</div><div>Item for appreciation</div></div>	South Africa (N = 38)												Rwanda (N = 47)											
	SWP (N = 13)			SWL (N = 11)			SWOM (N =7)			KI (N =7)			SWP (N = 20)			SWL (N = 5)			SWOM (N = 7)			KI (N = 15)		
Social workers:	Yes	No	NSA	Yes	No	NSA	Yes	No	NSA	Yes	No	NSA	Yes	No	NSA	Yes	No	NSA	Yes	No	NSA	Yes	No	NSA
Love their profession	13	0	0	11	0	0	5	0	2	4	0	3	18	0	2	4	0	1	5	0	2	10	0	5
Are well perceived by beneficiaries	10	0	3	9	0	2	5	0	2	4	0	3	17	1	2	3	0	2	4	0	3	7	0	8
Work in good conditions	0	10	3	1	9	1	0	4	3	0	4	3	0	19	1	0	4	1	0	5	2	0	10	5
Are well considered in general	1	8	4	1	8	2	1	4	2	1	3	3	2	14	4	0	3	2	2	2	3	5	5	5

Appendix F: Training programme of ECP volunteers

Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5
<p>1. INTRODUCTION TO ORGANISATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Background - Services - Client system <p>2. INTROD TO PROJECT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reason - Aims - Procedure <p>3. TRAINING PROGRAMME</p> <p>4. CONTRACT</p> <p><u>Encompasses</u></p> <p>Familiarise with organisation and project.</p> <p>Outline ambit of service delivery</p>	<p>1. CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definitions - Signs and symptoms - Assessment - Counseling <p>2. INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At organisation - E.C.P Team <p><u>Encompasses</u></p> <p>Understanding the range of abuse.</p> <p>Outline expectations of volunteers with regard to case management.</p>	<p>1. SUBSTANCE ABUSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different types - Resources available - Effect on family life <p>2. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Types and behaviour - Services available - Procedures and legal assistance. <p><u>Encompasses</u></p> <p>Understanding two very common social problems.</p>	<p>1. PARENTING SKILLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic needs of a child - Discipline - Limits and rules. <p><u>Encompasses</u></p> <p>Outline adequate parenting skills.</p> <p>Setting appropriate rules and discipline procedures.</p>	<p>1. MANAGEMENT SKILLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to manage a project. - Supervision - Communication - Possible barriers. <p><u>Encompasses</u></p> <p>Preparation to co-ordinate the project after social workers' withdrawal.</p> <p>2. MID EVALUATION</p>
Session 6	Session 7	Session 8	Session 9	Session 10
<p>1. ASSESSMENT</p> <p>2. INTERVIEWING SKILLS</p> <p>3. RESOURCES</p> <p>4. ADMINISTRATION</p> <p><u>Encompasses</u></p> <p>Interview and assessment skills when investigating cases.</p> <p>Forms required to be completed.</p> <p>Resources available in order to refer clients appropriately.</p>	<p>1. SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Laying a charge - Role in different problems <p>2. CHILD PROTECTION UNIT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Services provided - Legal procedures <p><u>Encompasses</u></p> <p>Criminal and legal procedures.</p>	<p>1. PLACE OF SAFETY HOMES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dealing with aggression - Rights of child/parent/caregiver - What type of child comes to a place of safety <p><u>Encompasses</u></p> <p>Aspects relevant to places of safety.</p>	<p>1. FIRST AID TRAINING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic First Aid training - Possible scenarios - Safety procedures and hazards. <p><u>Encompasses</u></p> <p>First Aid techniques and procedures relevant to children.</p>	<p>1. CHILD CARE ACT 74/83</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview of relevant sections pertaining to work. - Statutory procedures required e.g. forms. <p><u>Encompasses</u></p> <p>Legal framework volunteers role within statutory procedures e.g. authorisation.</p>

Appendix G : Models of community work according to Rothman and Tropman

Models Criteria	Social Planning Model	Community Development Model	Social Action Model
NEEDS	Solve concrete problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lacking skills ; - Need empowerment ; - Collaboration in changing conditions. 	Disadvantaged group demands access to resources
CLIENTS	Consumers	Citizens, Participants	Victims, oppressed
CHANGE STRATEGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leaders, social workers, experts, - Fact finding, analysis, plan action, - Determine appropriate service, - Delivery of goods, services to people who need them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involved in felt needs, problem solving ; - Partners in process of change - Task group, discussion ; communication ; - Aims at consensus, self-help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political tactics - Mass action, marches, memoranda - Discuss action to be taken - Conflict resolution
GOALS	Task goals	Process goals	Task and process goals.
ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKER	Technical, expert, research skills	Teacher, enabler, skills in group work.	Advocate, mass organiser, enabler
OUTCOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leaders plan appropriate services - Not capacity building 	Empowerment, capacity building.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distribution of power, resources - Improved decision making - Empowerment.

Source: Inspiration from Jack Rothman with John E. Tropman and adapted from Green, S. 2001. *Perspectives, theories and models in social work, Module course 3B*. University of Stellenbosch.